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Biography.

LIVES

OF

THE BRITISH ADMIRALS,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY VIEW

OF THE

NAVAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMAN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW;

AND JOHN TAYLOR,

UPPER GOWER STREET.

1833.

LIVES
of the
BRITISH ADMIRALS,
WITH AN Introductory View OF THE
NAVAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BY

ROBERT SOUTHEY, LL.D.

Vol. I



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PREFACE.

In this Naval History of England, no more of our general history is included than was necessary for forming a connected narrative, and for tracing the causes and consequences of those events which are the proper subject of the work. After the accession of Elizabeth, it may best be continued in a biographical form; because there are then materials for such biography, whereby we are enabled to understand how much depended upon the character of individual commanders. It was not, indeed, till her reign that the military and naval services began to be considered as distinct.

The evils which maritime enemies have inflicted upon this country, and which we in return have inflicted upon others, may seem an unpromising and ungrateful subject. Yet such a history will not be without interest, while men retain their admiration for the great, their sympathy for the brave, and the love of their native land. Entertainment, therefore, it may be expected to afford; and the information which it may convey must be in proportion to the research that has been employed in collecting it; and a higher end will be attained, if the reader should feel that the sense of right and wrong, and the ways of Providence, have been borne in mind religiously throughout.

Keswick, Feb. 11. 1833.

ANALYTICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL

TABLE

OF THE

NAVAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

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LIVES

OF

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WITH AN INTRODUCTORY VIEW

OF THE

NAVAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

ACCORDING to the Welsh Triads *, the earliest name by which Britain was known was CLAS MERDDIN, the sea-defended green spot. Such an appellation may seem to have been prophetic. But the sea defends no people who cannot defend themselves; and it was with this feeling that Wordsworth, the great poet of his age, poured forth a lofty strain, when, looking from a valley near Dover towards the coast of France, and "the span of waters" which separated us from that then most formidable neighbour (for it was while Buonaparte was in the plenitude of his power), he said, —

> "Even so doth God protect us, if we be
> Virtuous and wise! Winds blow, and waters roll,
> Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;
> Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
> Spake laws to *them*, and said, that by the soul
> Only, the nations shall be great and free." †

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* Cambro-Briton, i. 8.

† Sonnets dedicated to Liberty, part i. sonnet xi.

With all the ports of the Continent in his possession, and all its navies at his command, that narrow channel was found impassable by the most ambitious, the most powerful, the most enterprising, and the most inveterate enemy with whom this nation ever was engaged in war; for Great Britain had manfully won and victoriously maintained the dominion of the sea. It will be neither an unworthy nor a useless task for an Englishman who loves his country, and who, in doing his duty towards it in his station, trusts that he may deserve to be held in remembrance by posterity, to record the actions of those brave men by whom that dominion was acquired: and a series of their lives, ("wherein," to use the words of a wise and good man *, "I intend to do them right with the truth thereof, and myself with the freedom,") will be the most convenient form for a compendious naval history of England.

It is, however, no wish of the writer that the work he has thus undertaken should be the cause of inducing any hopeful youth, who otherwise might not have been so inclined, to enter the naval service; the ways of that service are as little ways of pleasantness as its paths are paths of peace; and rather would he that his right hand should forget its cunning than that his writings should produce such an effect. Nevertheless, as for that profession, with all its determents and its moral dangers, adventurers never will be wanting, so long as, in the order of Providence, such means of national defence are needful,.. it is good that they should be provided

* Sir Henry Wotton. Parallel between the Earl of Essex and the Duke of Buckingham.

with a manual of this kind, wherein, as in a chart, they may discern what they are to seek and what to shun, by perceiving what things in the conduct of their predecessors ought to be regarded as warnings, and what as examples. And as every way of life, from the highest to the humblest, has its besetting sins, so, let it be remembered, each may and ought to have its appropriate virtues; and those which the seaman is called upon to practise are of a high order. He lives in a course of privations, self-denial, and strict obedience, always in insecurity, often in danger, not seldom in the face of death. Through such discipline no man can pass unchanged; he must be brutalised by it, or exalted; it will either call forth the noble qualities of his nature, or worsen a bad disposition, and harden an evil heart. The more necessary is it, therefore, that he should be taught where to look for examples, and where for assistance and support: the former are afforded him by history, which is always most useful when it is related with most fidelity; for the latter he must look to that Heavenly Father who has created and preserved him, and in His infinite mercy has given him the means of grace.

Sailors are taught in their part of our incomparable Liturgy to pray that they may be a safeguard to the sovereign and his dominions, and a security to such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions. They are required, before a battle, to call upon the Lord, and entreat Him "who sitteth on the throne, judging right," to "take the cause into His own hand, and judge between them and their enemies;" and they are enjoined, after the victory

has been given them, to acknowledge that He has been their strength, and to pray that "the mercies which they have received at His hands may be improved to His glory, to the advancement of His Gospel, the honour of their sovereign, and, as far as in them lieth, to the good of all mankind." Thus solemnly are they instructed; and it is not presumptuous to believe, that while the service is carried on in this spirit, and in this faith, the protection which has hitherto been vouchsafed it, and which is thus implored, will never be withdrawn.

LIVES

OF

THE BRITISH ADMIRALS,

ETC.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

BRITISH SHIPS AT THE TIME OF CÆSAR'S INVASION. — CARAUSIUS. — SAXON PIRATES IN THE FOURTH CENTURY. — SAXON CONQUEST. — SYSTEM OF NORTHERN PIRACY. — NAVAL FORCE ESTABLISHED BY ALFRED.

The first inhabitants of Great Britain were a maritime people, a branch of those whom the Greeks called Kimmerioi, and the Latins Cimbri; a name which the Cambrians, or, more properly the Cymry, retain in their own tongue to this day. According to tradition, which there is no cause for impugning, they came from Asia, or the Summer Country, but by way of the Hazy*, or German Ocean. The Kelts, a kindred people, came next, from the opposite coast of France; and it is probable that the Phenicians at an early age did more than visit this island, otherwise there would not have remained so many vestiges of their language, their mythology, and their superstitions. Cæsar could obtain no information either concerning the extent of the land or the condition of its inhabitants, for none but merchants were allowed to enter the ports; and these, as it appears, the ports only. A country could

* Triads, quoted in Turner's History of the Anglo Saxons, i. 38. (third edition) Cambro-Briton, i. 45, 46.

hardly have been thus jealously defended without some maritime force; but when Cæsar determined upon invading the Britons, he had previously destroyed their fleet in the great naval victory which he obtained over them and their allies, the Veneti. The description of the Gallic ships which he encountered in that action must be understood as describing the British also. Their bottoms were flatter than those of the Roman vessels, that they might be the better accommodated to tide harbours and to a shoal coast; and they were elevated both at the prow and the poop, because that mode of building was then deemed best adapted to our stormy seas. They were constructed wholly of oak, for strength; the anchors were secured by iron chains instead of cables; and the sails were made of skins and thin leather, either because the people were not acquainted with the use of linen, or because it was erroneously supposed (and this was thought by Cæsar more likely) that no weaker material could withstand the winds to which they were liable in these parts. It was by disabling their rigging that he defeated them; and this he effected by affixing keen bill-hooks to long poles, and catching with these the ropes whereby their sails were fastened to the mast; this hold having been caught, the Roman rowers put forth all their strength, and when the tackling was cut the ship became unmanageable. Thus the Romans obtained a victory which they knew not how to seek by any other means; for the beaks of their galleys could make no impression upon the strong oak timbers of the Gauls and Britons; and even when they set up towers, the enemy looked down upon them from their lofty poops, and threw their weapons at advantage. An opportune calm enabled Cæsar to complete his success, when the ships which had saved their cordage endeavoured to make off; and of two hundred and twenty sail, of which the allied fleet consisted, so few escaped, that their naval force was in that action destroyed.*

* Cæsar, de Bello Gallico, l. iii. § 13—16. Mare Clausum, Seldeni Opera, ii. 1287.

As it thus appears that the Britons had good war ships before the Roman conquest*,..so is it certain that they were hardy seamen, and used to cross both the English and Irish channels in vessels constructed of wicker work and covered with skins.† Coracles‡ thus made, differing only in the material with which they are coated, and carrying only a single person, are still used upon the Severn, and in most of the Welsh rivers. They are so small and light, that, when the fisherman lands, he takes his boat out of the water and bears it home upon his back. In the management of such slight and unsteady vessels great hardihood and dexterity must have been acquired, especially in a climate so uncertain, and in such stormy seas as ours.

Cæsar's success against the Britons, when he invaded them, was not such as he had gained in his naval action against the Veneti. Over these he exercised, in full rigour, what were then deemed the rights of conquest,.. putting their senators to the sword, and selling the people for slaves by military auction. But the advantages which he obtained over the Britons afforded him little more than a pretext for withdrawing from the island without dishonour. On his return to Rome he dedicated to Venus a breast-plate, adorned, it

* The learned person who digested the Chronological Epitome of the Historical Triads (Cambro-Briton, iii. 133—137.) fixes the probable date for the introduction of ship-building among the Cymry about 100 years before Christ. The Triads ascribe it to one of "the three beneficent artizans of the isle of Britain; Corvenwr, the bard of Ceri, of the Long White Lake, who first made a ship, with sail and rudder, for the nation of the Cymry." — (*Ib.* ii. 389.)

† Selden, ii. 1283. It was in boats of this construction, the use of which he had learnt in Britain, that Cæsar passed his army across the Segre, near Ilerda (the modern Lerida), when he was advancing against Afranius and Petreius. — *De Bell. Civ.* l. i. § 54.

‡ Several canoes have been dug up in Lincolnshire, all of oak, and remarkable for the free grain of the timber; so that the millwrights and carpenters who examined it, declared that, in their opinion, it was of foreign growth, and the produce of a warmer country. But that the canoes could not have been brought there from any warmer country seems certain; and if any inference can be drawn from the grain of the wood, as indicating its growth in a warmer climate, it would seem to be, that these canoes were made when the climate of this island was warm enough for elephants, hyenas, tigers, hippopotamuses, and other inhabitants of southern countries, whose remains have been brought to light here.

was said, with British pearls *: such an offering to the sea-born goddess was intended to denote that he had acquired the dominion of the seas, and this became the theme of his encomiasts; and it was not an empty boast. For the naval superiority of the Romans could no longer be disputed in the British seas; and it enabled them in the reign of Augustus to exact that as a tribute from Britain which Cæsar had only imposed in the form of a duty upon all imports and exports. Caligula's insane bravado upon the opposite Batavian coast, where he drew up his army upon the sand, and made them collect shells as the spoils of the sea, unequivocally proved his craziness; but it also shows of what importance the Romans esteemed their maritime dominion, and that they considered it as depending in these parts upon the possession of this island. And when Claudius invaded it, and carried into effect the threat of his frantic predecessor, he caused upon his triumphal return a naval † crown to be affixed beside the civic one on the summit of the Palatine palace, and he also was panegyrised as "sovereign of the ocean."

It was chiefly by means of his ships that Agricola completed the reduction of the island, as far as it was reduced. From that time the Romans kept a fleet upon its coast; and if the title archigubernus is not rather to be interpreted chief pilot, Seius Saturninus was the first high admiral of the British fleet whose name appears in history, and the only Roman one whose name has been preserved. He held that station (whichever it may have been) in the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius.‡ But there is nothing uncertain concern-

* C. Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ix. § 57. Pliny seems to suspect that the pearls were not procured in Britain: he says, "In Britannia parvos atque decolores nasci certum est; quoniam divus Julius thoracem, quem Veneri Genetrici in templo ejus dicavit, ex Britannicis margaritis factum voluerit intelligi."

† Suetonius, in Claud. § 17.

‡ Henry, i. 422. Selden, Mare Clausum, lib. ii. c. 5., there quoted. The Britannia on our copper coin differs little, except in costume, from the Britannia on the copper coin of Antoninus Pius:—"Ea est forma muliebris, pallâ seu supparo induta, nunc rupibus, nunc globo in oceano insidens cum signo militari, hastâ, scuto.—Britanniam circumambienti

ing the rank and character of the next person, who, after an interval of two centuries, kept the British seas, and first made Britain a maritime power. This person, Caius Carausius by name, and by birth a Menapian of the lowest origin, had been, for his approved courage and nautical skill, appointed to the command of the Roman fleet, which had its station at Gessoriacum (now Boulogne) in his native country. With this fleet he was to scour the seas, and clear them of the northern sea-rovers, who had now begun to infest all civilised coasts within their reach. But he, whose object at that time was to enrich himself, compounded with the pirates, instead of destroying them; and when he learnt that this practice was suspected, he suffered them to pass unmolested on their outward voyage, and intercepted them on their return, laden with booty, which he took to himself, distributing it among his men so as to secure their fidelity. Maximian, who then governed the western division of the empire, rightly apprehended that Carausius was meditating some scheme of usurpation. In those ages, power constituted right; and any means seem to have been thought allowable for retaining, at least, if not for acquiring it. The readiest means, perhaps the only ones, which occurred to the Emperor for preventing an intended treason, was to make away with the traitor; and, as a Mahommedan Sultan would now do towards a governor whom he suspected, he sent a messenger to assassinate him.* The attempt was either foreseen or frustrated; and Carausius, sailing across to Britain, persuaded the Roman troops there, and the people in general, to take up his cause, assumed the purple, and took the titles of Emperor and Augustus.

A.D. 289.

The adventurer was well qualified for the perilous station which he had attained: he increased his navy

oceano imperare ita notabant, et Romanum imperatorem Britanniæ." — *Mare Clausum, Selden. Op.* t. ii. 1309.

* Mascou's Hist. of the Ancient Germans, English translation, book vi. § iii. p. 243. Aurelius Victor, c. xxxix. Eutropius, lib. ix. § xlii. there quoted. Turner, i. 162—164. Henry, i. 61.

by building a great number of ships upon the Roman model; he courted the friendship of the Franks and other barbarous nations, invited their young men into his fleet and his army, trained them both to the land and sea service; and being in possession of both sides of the channel he harassed the coasts of Gaul, and Spain, and Italy. A new naval force was to be created before any effort could be directed against him; but sailors cannot be made ready upon any sudden demand, like soldiers; Carausius obtained an easy victory; and Diocletian and Maximian saw they had no better course than that of making peace with him for the present. They acknowledged him, therefore, by the name of Marcus Aurelius Valerius Carausius, for their brother Emperor, and resigned Britain to him. He soon recovered from the Picts and Scots all that had ever been possessed by the Romans; and he repaired the wall of Severus, which he is said to have strengthened with seven castles, or rather towers. A remarkable monument of antiquity on the river Carron, known by the name of Arthur's Oven*, among other guesses concerning its origin, has been supposed to have been erected by him. Cultivating, also, the arts of peace as well as of war, he endeavoured to make the Romanised Britons sensible that it was not less for their advantage than their honour that the Emperor should reside among them. He struck sundry coins, specimens of which yet remain; and skilful artists came hither from the Continent, attracted by the encouragement of a munificent sovereign. But the greatest proof of his policy is, that he formed a league with the piratical tribes who were then settled on the Thracian Bosphorus; the object of which was that they should send a strong fleet up the Mediterranean to join him on

* "Mr. Gordon supposes it," says Pennant, "to have been a *sacellum*, or little chapel — a repository for the Roman *insignia* or standards: but, to the mortification of every curious traveller, this matchless edifice is now no more; its barbarous owner, a Gothic knight, caused it to be demolished, in order to make a mill dam with the materials; which, within less than a year, the Naiads, in resentment of the sacrilege, came down in a flood and entirely swept away.—Unfortunately it stood at a small distance from the founderies, on a little rising above the river."—*Pinkerton's Collection of Voyages*, iii. 116.

the British seas, and act against the Romans. Little pretence even to good faith was made in those imperial ages; and the peace which he had concluded with Dioclietian and Maximian was tacitly intended on both sides to continue only till a favourable opportunity for breaking it should arrive. The old Emperors, who at this time had adopted each a coadjutor and successor, exerted themselves now to crush an enemy, who, it was evident, would not long content himself with the possession of Britain. Maximian, accordingly, fitted out a fleet of a thousand sail in the Batavian ports; and the Cæsar Constantius marched with an army to besiege Carausius in Gessoriacum. This undertaking seems to have been begun before the naval armament was ready to co-operate; and Constantius had no other means of cutting off the enemy from the succours which he received by sea, than by building a dam across the harbour. He, no doubt, bore in mind the example of Alexander at Tyre, and did not take into consideration the force of the tide. So strong, however, was the mole which he erected, that Carausius, despairing of any other deliverance, broke through the Roman camp, with a few followers, in a dark night, and embarking in a small vessel, crossed to Britain. It is said, that on the following night the sea swept away the mole, and left the port open; but this, for which he must long have looked wistfully, occurred too late for Carausius, for the town surrendered, and with it a considerable part of his naval force. Constantius then was enabled to leave a sufficient squadron on the coast, and proceed with the rest of his fleet against the Franks, whom he entirely defeated.*

A.D. 292.

Carausius, thus deprived of his dominion on the opposite coast, and of his allies also, was reduced to act on the defensive; and he might have maintained himself in Britain, and not improbably recovered the command of the channel, if any abilities could be secure against domestic treason. One of his chief officers, who

* Gibbon, ii. 123—127. (8vo edition). Henry, i. 62.

was also his most trusted friend, Allectus by name, murdered him, and assumed the purple in his stead. This was joyful news for the Romans, who looked upon the separation of Britain from the empire as an intolerable reproach, and as a grievous loss also; being a country that produced corn in abundance, was rich in pastures and in mines, yielded a large revenue in its customs and tributes, and was environed with havens, the importance of which was now perceived when the coasts of the empire were infested by maritime enemies: yet nearly three years elapsed after the murder of Carausius, before Constantius could complete his preparations for invading the island. At length he sailed with one part of his armament from the Scheldt; the other, putting to sea at the same time from the Seine, under favour of a fog, passed the British fleet which was lying off the Isle of Wight to intercept them. This division landed without opposition, and their commander, Asclepiodotus, set fire to his ships, because they must otherwise have fallen into the enemies' hands. Allectus manifested more courage than ability in his measures; marching hastily against this division, he left Constantius to land unresisted; and he fell in the first action, having cast off the purple, not in the hope of escape, it is said, for of that he despaired, but that it might not be known he was slain; but his body was discovered upon the field.* His army consisted almost wholly of Franks, Saxons, and other Northmen; scarcely a Roman, that is, a civilised Briton, being found among the dead. Those who escaped made with all speed for London, intending to sack the city, and then take ship for their own country; but a part of Constantius's force, which, having parted company in the fog, had landed in the Thames, arrived at London just in time to protect the inhabitants; and these barbarians were slaughtered in the streets.† Their

* Coins of this adventurer are preserved, having on the reverse a galley with this inscription: — VIRTUS AUG. "Quà imperium ejus Britannicum oceani circumflui dominio maxime subnixum esse quin vellet, vix dubito," says Selden, ii. 1294.

† Henry, i. 63.

leader, Gallus, was driven into a rivulet, and drowned; and from him that rivulet is said to have been called Walbrook*,.. a name retained by the parish under which the stream now flows.

Constantius was extolled by his encomiast for the recovery of Britain, as if he had conquered another world, and added the main ocean to the Roman empire. The evil which he had put an end to might have spread, it was truly said, far as the ocean seas stretch, and the Mediterranean gulfs extended, for no place which the pirates could approach was safe from them. "They put us in fear," said the orator, "as far as either sea reacheth or winds blow. But now were the seas purged and brought to perpetual quietness. Now were the coasts of Gaul in security; now was Spain safe; now Italy; now Africa, and all nations, even to the marshes of Mæotis, relieved from their perpetual apprehensions." † The importance of Constantius's success was not, indeed, over-rated as to its immediate consequences; but the quietness, which the orator had promised should be perpetual, was of short duration in the British seas; the spirit of maritime enterprise which possessed the northern nations had received only a temporary check; they soon recovered so much activity, that the Romans found it necessary to keep a fleet on the south and east coasts, and to build a chain of forts along the coast from the borders of Lincolnshire and Norfolk to the Isle of Wight; and before the end of the third century, the commander-in-chief of those garrisons had the title of count of the Saxon ‡ shore in Britain; the name of that

* "In the British tongue, Nant-Gall, and by the Saxons Walbrook."—*Campbell*, 1. 17. I have not met with Campbell's authority. This derivation is more likely than that given by Mr. Nightingale (Beauties of England, vol. x. part iii. p. 269.), who says, that as this stream past through an aperture made in London wall, it received the name of Wall Brook. Other brooks must have entered in the same manner.

† Holinshed (ed. 1807.), i. 521—525., where the substance of a panegyric ascribed to Mamertinus is given at considerable length.

‡ The Count of the Saxon shore resided at will in any of nine maritime towns on the Sussex, Kent, Essex, and Norfolk coast; "quas (sedes) pro insignibus, ad mare depictas et principali diplomati adjectas, semper habuit." These ports were, Othona in the hundred of Dangy in Essex; Dubris, Dover; Lemmanis, near Hithe; Branodum, Branchester, in Norfolk; Gariannum, either Yarmouth (Gernemutha) or some place near; Regulbrum, or

formidable people being thus given to a part of the island long before they attempted a settlement on it.*

During the fourth century they not only infested the seas, but acted in concert with their kindred people, the Picts and lowland Scots, and baffled all the efforts of the Romans to repress them, till Theodosius, father to the Emperor of that name, and himself, far more worthy to have been called the Great, was appointed to the command here. By a series of victories over the Saxons, he obtained the honourable title of Saxonicus; he regulated the internal affairs of the island with as much ability as he displayed in its defence, and left it safe and prosperous for a time, with the blessings of the people.† But no prosperity could be stable under an unsettled system of government, which tempted every ambitious adventurer with the prospect of a throne. The Britons, at the latter end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, were deeply engaged in the wars which such adventurers raised; great numbers perished on the Continent, or, instead of returning from it, settled in Armorica; and the country, having thus been drained of its best population, had no time for recovering its native strength, before the Romans, pressed on all sides by the Teutonic and Sarmatic nations, and then in the last stage of their own degeneracy, found it necessary to withdraw their troops from Britain, and leave the island to its fate. They had taught the Britons many of the arts, and comforts, and refinements of civilisation; but they had subdued the spirit of independence; and the people, who by their departure were emancipated from foreign dominion, were in a condition which made them regard it rather as a desertion than a deliverance. Taking heart, however, in their necessity, they made a great effort against the Picts and Scots, recovered from them the cities which they had taken, and drove them within

A.D. 420.

Regulbus, Reculver; Rittupis, or Rhutupiæ, at the mouth of the Wantsome in Kent, supposed to be Richborough; Anderidos, on the Rother; Newenden; and Portus Adurni, Aldrington, near Shoreham."—*Selden, Mare Clausum*, Op. ii. 1299.

* Henry, i. 237. 424.

† Ibid. i. 71, 72.

their own borders. But the unanimity which had given them this success ended with it. Every ambitious chief, who could keep together a sufficient body of followers for defying his neighbours, made himself a petty sovereign. The country was divided among such royalets, and devastated by their perpetual wars. Thus it became again a prey to the Picts and Scots, who, though more barbarous than themselves, had yet some rude regularity in their government, or rather some principle of succession in their chiefs, which rendered them more efficient as a people. The Britons were not able to govern, and therefore not to defend, themselves. One of their kings called in foreign aid; and the arrival of two northern adventurers at Ebbsfleet, in the isle of Thanet, with three ships, and not more than 300 men, led to consequences of more permanent importance than Cæsar's invasion of the island. Thanet was then separated from the main land by an estuary nearly a mile in width: that estuary is now reduced to the narrow channels of the river Stour, and of the Nethergang, a still smaller stream; but at that time it was wide enough to render the isle a strong hold for its new occupants, because they had command of the water.

A.D. 449.

These first adventurers were Jutes, Saxons, and Angles; others of the same stock, speaking the same language, and under the same institutions, civil, military, and religious, followed them, and finally subdued and replenished the better part of the land. They were one people, though, as every chief conquered for himself, divided into many petty kingdoms. The Jutes lost their name, and the whole were at length collectively called Saxons or Anglo-Saxons, and, lastly, English. As they had frequented the seas only as pirates, no sooner had they effected a settlement here than they ceased to be seamen. War was the only employment which they desired; they had enough of this in winning the country from the Britons, and contending for it among themselves; and they had nothing to fear from maritime enemies, so long as the ties of affinity were

remembered in the countries from whence they had emigrated. Those ties grew weaker in every generation; and when England, by the conversion of its northern conquerors, once more became a part of Christendom, and began to partake of those blessings of civilisation which Christianity, corrupted as it was, brought with it wherever it was established, the Northmen were again tempted to its coasts by the desire of plunder. Offa, the most ambitious and powerful king who reigned during the polyarchy, saw how necessary it was for their own security that the English should become a maritime people: he encouraged them, therefore, to build ships, and trade with the Continent themselves, instead of letting foreigners be the carriers of their produce; and when Charlemagne denied them admission into his ports, this king, whose high spirit wanted only a wider theatre to have made him a most conspicuous actor in the wicked drama of those ages, exercised his right of reprisals; and terminated the dispute by a commercial treaty *, which was negotiated by Alcuin.

A.D. 787.

Offa's policy was too late; he was a great but wicked man, and the hand of retributive justice was upon him and his race. Some seven years before his death, the Danes, with three ships † from "the land of robbers," made their first invasion of England; and during the following half century they became more formidable to it than ever the earlier Northmen had been; for they had now made piracy a part of their political system. The shores of the Baltic and of the adjacent ocean were possessed by a most enterprising and ferocious people, of the same stock as the Saxon occupants of this island, but probably with a fresh infusion of a more barbarous and perhaps different race. Upon the death of a king, one of his sons was chosen to succeed him, the rest had the seas for their inheritance; ships and equipments were

* Turner's Anglo-Saxons, i. 419—421. William of Malmesbury, Sharpe's translation, 94.

† Saxon Chronicle, Ingram's edition, 78. It is expressly stated there, that these were the first ships of Danishmen that sought the land of the English people.

provided for them, and they passed their lives in piracy, which among these people was the most honourable, the most exciting, and the most gainful of all occupations. Mahommedan sovereigns usually at this day commence their reign by putting to death* their brethren by whom, or in whose names, the succession might be disputed; the system which sent the younger and rejected branches of a royal family to rove the ocean as sea-kings, inflicted wider evil, but was less malignant in itself: for this allowed the natural affections and domestic charities to grow up and flourish; but where these are extirpated, as they are in oriental dynasties, the heart is utterly desecrated; and for the people among whom fratricide is thus established as a custom of the realm there can be no hope; they can only proceed from degradation to degradation, till they perish as a nation.

The Vikingr, as these sea-rovers were called, were, to all shores within reach of their incursions, what the buccaneers were during the seventeenth century to the coasts of Spanish America: like them, they were the bravest and most inhuman of mankind. But the age in which they lived, and the institutions in which they were trained up, are to be regarded, and it will then appear that the difference between them in wickedness is great indeed. The state of nature is not a state of war, though erring philosophers have so represented it; but false religions and barbarising customs have rendered it so from the earliest times after the dispersion of mankind, always in the uncivilised parts of the world, and too generally in those where civilisation has taken root and flourished. Before the north of Europe was converted to Christianity, all free men were considered there to be as certainly and properly born for war, as sheep and oxen are reared for slaughter. With all the infinite variety of individual dispositions, collective men are, nevertheless, like clay in the potter's hand; they receive the stamp of their age and country, and it is in iron ages

* The book of Judges shows how early this practice (which is the system of a bee-hive) was followed in the East.

that the deepest impress is produced. The law of nations being then nothing but the law of the strongest, no country could be at peace*, unless it were able at all times to resist all invaders; and none could at any time be secure, because all were always exercising themselves in war. The Vikingr in those days were the Arabs of the sea; .. their hand was against every man, and every man's hand was against them; their world was in a state of warfare; all men were common enemies, those alone excepted who were united in friendship by some special tie; and they only did to others what others would have done unto them. When we see what men are, in the most enlightened and Christian countries, living under good laws, and in the profession of a religion which was proclaimed with peace on earth, good will towards men, and by the due observance of which peace on earth might be established, and peace of mind here as well as endless happiness hereafter would become the assured portion of every one who accepts the proffered salvation, .. can we wonder at the worse than brutal condition to which our fellow-creatures may be brought by institutions which, instead of seeking to repress the evil propensities of human nature, are designed for exciting them to the strongest action?

There have been fouler and bloodier superstitions than that of the Scandinavians; but none, either among earlier or later idolatries, that has produced so great a degree of national ferocity; none that has ever made war the great and all-absorbing business of life, and represented the souls of the happy in paradise as cutting each other every day to pieces for amusement, and assembling after such pastimes when heads and dissevered limbs were reunited, to drink together out of the skulls of their enemies. Not to die in battle was esteemed among them a misfortune and a disgrace; a death of

* —— "Fate leaves no man longer quiet here,
Than blessed peace is to his neighbour dear."

This melancholy reflection of lord Brook is not more applicable to history than it is to private life.

age or sickness was to be punished by exclusion from the battles-royal and the skull-cups of Valhalla; and, as a means of averting such a miserable destiny in the world to come, there were many who committed suicide. Some of the Vikingr boasted that they never caroused over a hearth, nor slept under a smoking roof; but commonly they seem to have roved the seas as long as they continued open, and, when they were ice-locked, to have revelled upon their spoils in some friendly port during the winter. There is so much of hardihood and of enterprise in a seafaring life, that it will always attract the most adventurous spirits wherever a people addict themselves to maritime pursuits; and the more hazardous and the more audacious the adventure, the more eagerly will such tempers engage in it. Thus, though a great proportion of the Northmen literally inhabited the seas, the land-kings themselves made piracy their summer occupation, when they were not engaged in war at home: all strangers were enemies: they went, therefore, as enemies wherever the wind carried them, and they returned with the stores of every kind which more industrious nations had laid up; gold and silver, church ornaments, domestic utensils, rich or useful vestments, mead, ale, and wine, and such prisoners as were spared to perform the business of agriculture and other servile work for their new masters. But mercy was no attribute of the gods of Valhalla; and that generosity which leads to it was seldom found among their votaries. Their course, on whatever coast they landed, was tracked with fire and blood; neither age, nor sex, nor infancy, were spared; for it was not in the ability with which their excursions were planned and executed that they had their chief delight, nor in the excitements of hope and danger, but in the act of carnage; so totally had they corrupted their humanity. We read of barbaric kings who fed their captive princes * like dogs under their table, carried them about in cages, and set foot upon them when they mounted on horseback; but compared with the usages

* Judges, i. 7.

of his prisoners by a Baltic hero *, this may be called courtesy; and in the cruelty which the Northmen exercised upon those whom they put to death, they were scarcely exceeded by the North American savages.

The discipline which existed among the Vikingr seems to have been preserved by a stern † equality, submitting to no other control than its own laws, and that obedience to their chiefs, which, for their own sake, was indispensable. There could be no bolder or better sailors. Early education on their own stormy seas had given them full confidence in themselves: skill in swimming, and dexterity in managing the oar, were among the accomplishments of which their princes ‡ boasted; and it is related of king Olaf Tryggeson §, that he could walk on the oars without the boat while the men were rowing. But it was not upon skill that they relied in naval battle; they sought then only to lash ship to ship, and let the issue be decided by strength and courage. Perhaps it was because courage could confer so little distinction among men, who were all in the highest degree courageous, that they vied with each other in ferocity. Fear is an infirmity, which even the feeble overcome when they are compelled either to endure the worst, or to exert themselves for averting it; but there are feelings of humanity which the bravest partake, and of which the wicked cannot divest themselves without some effort; and therefore they, whose hearts were suited to this way of life, gloried in manifesting how completely they had subdued in themselves the last remains of humanity. They devoured raw flesh, as if to show that such diet accorded with their ferocious nature; and they made it a sport in their inroads to toss babes one to another, and receive the infant on the point of a spear!

* Stærk Odder's treatment of his prisoners is related, and, as it seems, approved, in the Hist. Gentis Dan. ascribed to Eric of Pomerania: "Quatuor aut sex ex iis complicans ad modum sedis, ad purgandum alvum; et multa alia præclara fecit" Quoted by Holberg, Dannemarks Riges Historie, vol. i. p 54. Yet this Odder the Strong was a hero of the highest renown, and a poet also, if (as I suppose) he be the same person from whom an Icelandic metre derives its name.

† Turner, i. 464, 465.

‡ Complaint of Harold. Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, 78.

§ Ibid. 81.

Some who aspired to the highest degree of atrocious renown, were called Berserkir: these men wrought themselves up by an effort of the will to the same pitch of fury which the Malays excite in themselves by a deleterious drug, before they *run amuck*: they became mad with rage, like a rabid animal, bit their shields, threw off their clothing; and naked, and howling like wild beasts, rushed upon their enemies. This practice was sanctioned by the example of their god Odin, wherefore they who followed it were at one time respected as being favoured with a divine influence; but it was so horrible in its manifestations and effects, so like the worst which can be imagined of demoniacal possession, that the Berserkir at last became objects of fear and loathing to the Northmen themselves; and the Berserkic madness, as it was then called, was prohibited by penal laws.*

This system of piracy was in full vigour about the time when the Danes commenced their depredations upon the British islands. Former invaders had come to conquer the land, that they might occupy it, and reap its produce: the object of these † was to plunder, and to lay waste, and to destroy. The Saxon chronicler ‡ says that their inroads were foretokened by dreadful signs and warnings, portentous lightning which terrified the people, and tempestuous winds and fiery dragons flying through the air. Blood also is said to have fallen from heaven like drops of rain; and crosses of a bloody colour to have appeared on men's garments as they walked abroad. § Such portents are in most ages easily imagined, or readily applied; at this time, indeed, it was evident that more than ordinary evils were about to visit the land. The consequences of a scheme of policy so framed and so pursued as that of the Vikingr, were lamented in helpless foresight by Charlemagne himself,

* Turner, i. 464, 465.

† The Danish writers speak of some claim upon Northumbria, in consequence of their king Hroar's marriage with the daughter of a Northumbrian royalist: but it is certain that all their expeditions, before the time of Sweyne, were made by Vikingr, not by any king of Denmark. Holberg, i. 50, 99.

‡ Page 80. A. D. 794.

§ Holinshed, i. 653.

a man deserving of the honourable epithet which has been inseparably united with his name. He was at dinner in the city of Narbonne, when one of their fleets, the first which had entered the Mediterranean, came in sight. It was evident, by the construction of the vessels, and the manner in which they were navigated, that they were not merchants; Charlemagne, therefore, rose from table to look at them; and perceiving too surely what they were, tears came into his eyes. "I fear not," he said, "that they can injure me; but I weep that they should dare, in my lifetime, thus to approach my coasts; for I foresee the misery they will bring upon my descendants!" * He fortified the entrance of his rivers, and stationed fleets or erected forts along the coasts both of the channel and of the German Ocean. † The British islands had no such protection. Even Charlemagne's defensive measures were of no avail when his dominions had passed into weaker hands: but Britain was open to the spoilers: it was still divided into petty kingdoms; and the people, being, as one of our historians says, "naturally hard and high-minded, continually scourged each other with intestine wars,". . thus, during the intervals that the Danes allowed them, wasting their strength in internal conflicts. The pirates were often resolutely and sometimes successfully resisted; but defensive war was waged, at miserable disadvantage, in a large island, the coasts of which were every where accessible, against an enemy who were masters of the seas. Frequent victories encouraged the invaders; occasional defeats exasperated them; and when such of them as were made prisoners were put to death, the Skalds, who composed death-songs in their name, exhorted their kin and countrymen to vengeance in heart-stirring strains, and invented circumstances of horror ‡ to inflame them, if that

* Monac. S. Gall. quoted by Turner, i. 484. Carte is of opinion that the Northmen, who at that time infested these islands, were those Saxons who, instead of submitting to Charlemagne, took refuge in the peninsula of Denmark. Life of Ormond, i. 10.

† Gaillard, Hist. de Charlemagne, ii. 472

‡ The death of Regner Lodbrog I regard as an invention of this kind. To cast a prisoner into a dungeon where he might be killed by venomous

were possible, with fiercer enmity, and make them seek after revenge as the holiest of all duties, and the keenest of all delights.

Their first incursion was on the coast of Wessex, where the Reeve thought to drive them, as a handful of robbers, to the king's town*, but was slain by them. They are next spoken of as making lamentable havoc in God's church at Lindisfarne, . . a venerable edifice, which suffered so often by their invasions, that the remains of St. Cuthbert were at length removed from thence, to be deposited where they might rest in peace. In another descent, they plundered the monastery at Wearmouth, remarkable as having been the first edifice in this island in which glass was used in the windows, and whither the first glass-makers were brought over at that time, and settled by St. Benedict Biscop, its founder. There, however, some of their leaders were slain; some of their ships foundered on the coast, and those of the crew who succeeded in swimming to shore found there as little mercy as they were wont to show.† But even these inroads had no effect in suspending the destructive feuds by which Northumbria was distracted; and the Danes met with so little resistance, because there was no ruler there able to raise any power of men by public authority to encounter with the common enemies ‡, that

A.D. 787.

793.

794.

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snakes, is a mode of death most unlikely to have been imagined in such a climate as Northumberland, and among a people who delighted to feast their eyes with the sight of an enemy's sufferings. But the vengeance which was taken for him by his sons, upon Ella the Northumbrian royalet, is in the spirit of the times; it was what Stephanus Stephanius thus describes in his notes on Saxo-Grammaticus: —

"Apud Anglos, Danos, aliasque nationes Boreales, victor ignominiâ summâ debellatum adversarium affecturus, gladium circa scapulas ad spinam dorsi adigebat, costasque amplissimo per corporis longitudinem facto vulnere, utrinque a spinâ separabat; quæ ad latera deductæ, alas repræsentabant aquilinas. Hoc genus mortis vocabant aquilam in dorso alicujus delineare. Glossarium Islandicum MS. ejusmodi vulnus sive plagam testatur." In Iarlasaga, "Tunc comes Einarus in dorso Halfdani aquilinam excitavit plagam, ita ut gladium dorso adigeret, omnesque costas a spinâ separaret, usque ad lumbos, indeque pulmones extraxit." In Ormsaga, "Ormerus evaginato gladio in dorso Brusi aquilinam infixit plagam, separatis a dorso costis, ad pulmonibus exemplis."

Very probably the spread eagle of heraldry was originally designed to blazon the remembrance of some such triumph over an enemy.

* Sax. Chron. 78. † Ibid. 80, 81.

‡ Holinshed, i. 655.

they were emboldened not merely to repeat their expeditions, but to invade the country with the intention of winning and possessing it. Adventurers were soon found in sufficient numbers to engage in an enterprise so inviting; for barbarous as Northumbria then was, it was far advanced beyond the shores of the Baltic, and of the Eastern Sea, in comparative civilisation, and in the consequent comforts of life: even its climate might offer some attraction to the Scandinavians. Fleet followed fleet: they had to contend with a people weakened not only by mutual slaughter, but by the exile or voluntary migration of many of the chief persons, both ecclesiastical and civil; and they established themselves in this part of England by an easy conquest, for which discord and anarchy had prepared the way.

This conquest seems to have occupied the whole attention of those Northmen whose views were directed toward England, for nearly forty years. During this time, other parts of the island were advancing through scenes of turmoil and treachery toward a more general, and therefore a more efficient government, than had been enjoyed since it ceased to be a Roman province. Egbert, who had succeeded to the kingdom of Wessex, first rendered the greater part of Wales tributary; successively compelled the kings of Kent, East Anglia, Mercia, and Sussex, to acknowledge themselves his vassals; and being thus undisputed lord of all the states south of the Humber, he marched against the Angles beyond that river. They also submitted to his authority as Bretwalda, a title equivalent to that of Emperor of Britain. But the Saxons and Angles, who began about this time to be collectively called English (for the Jutes had long lost their name as a separate people), yielded to the assumption of a power which, as it was felt to be useful, was also deemed legitimate, when there was sufficient strength to support its claims. There was an enemy now rooted in the land, and that enemy possessed the seas; and Egbert had to sustain more frequent and more obstinate contests with the Danes than with all the royalets of the

A.D. 800.

declining heptarchy. They ravaged the isle of Shepey *; A.D. 832.
and in the ensuing year landed from a fleet of five and thirty ships at Charmouth in Dorsetshire, and "began to make sore war in the land." Egbert gathered an army with what speed he could, and gave them battle † at a place called Carrum; but after an obstinate action, the day, which seemed to have been in his favour, turned against him by some chance of war. The bishops Hereferth of Winchester and Wigferth of Sherburne, with two of the chiefs or ealdermen, Dudda and Osmond by name, were slain, and he himself escaped under cover of the night.‡ A council was held at London §, for providing means against these formidable enemies, and, as it seems, with good effect; for when, in the year 835, the Danes landed in Cornwall, which, with the adjacent country, was then called West Wales, and the Britons ||, glad of an occasion to wreak their old vengeance upon the Saxons, joined them, Egbert, with a far smaller army, defeated their united forces near Kingston Hill; shortly after this victory he died, leaving a name, which, owing less to his own deserts (though he was a brave and able prince), than to the error of our earlier historians, has become a land-mark in English history.

833.

836.

Egbert had learnt much while he was an exile at the court of Charlemagne; but if he had learnt from that Emperor's example the impolicy of dividing his domi-

* Sax. Chron. 89. † Ibid.

‡ Sharpe's William of Malmesbury, 111. Holinshed, i. 658.

§ Turner, i. 440.

|| The Britons themselves sometimes engaged in piratical expeditions, though, as it appears, but seldom. A Triad speaks of "the three roving fleets of the Isle of Britain (meaning that part of it which the Britons possessed): the fleet of Llawr, the son of Eriv; the fleet of Divwg, the son of Alban; and the fleet of Dolor, the son of Mwrchath king of Manaw (the Isle of Man). But neither the age of these Welsh admirals is known, nor any thing more than their names, as thus recorded"— *Cambro-Briton*, ii. 387. There is another Triad which names the three fleet owners of the Isle of Britain: Geraint, the son of Erbin; Gwenwynwyn, the son of Nav; and March, the son of Meirchion; and each of these fleet-owners had six score ships, and six score mariners in each ship. Geraint is said to have been a prince of Devon in the sixth century, who was slain fighting on Arthur's side in the battle of Llongborth, and celebrated in an elegy by Llywarch Hen. He is also the hero of one of the Mabinogion Tales. "The history of the other two admirals is involved in darkness, though their names sometimes occur in our old writings"—*Cambro-Briton*, ii. 241.

nions, that lesson was not impressed upon his son, who, reserving Wessex to himself as his paternal kingdom, gave up to his son Æthelstan * all his father's conquests, which included Kent, Essex, Sussex, and Surrey. This was in him a greater error than in the western Emperor; his extensive and ill-compacted dominions could hardly have been kept together by any one less able and less vigorous than himself; whereas the petty states of the Anglo-Saxon polyarchy were weak if they were disunited, and never was their whole strength more needful than at this juncture. Ethelwulph was of a gentle disposition, suited for better times, and for a happier station than that to which his birth called him. Following the bent of that disposition, he had made a religious life his choice, and entered the monastery at Winchester, under the care of Swithin, a meek, unworldly, pious man, afterwards Bishop of that diocese, and still well known as the Aquarius of the English Almanack. He had even been ordained a subdeacon; but, on the death of his elder and only brother, he was summoned from the convent, a papal dispensation released him from his sacerdotal vows, and, when he succeeded to the throne, no want of vigour or of ability was found in him. He had to struggle with a maritime enemy, against whom no means of naval defence had been prepared; and the annals of his reign record, year after year, the miseries which these invaders brought upon the people. Hardly had he divided his kingdom, before three and thirty sail of pirates entered the Southampton river; after an obstinate battle, the Danes were defeated with great slaughter; but another squadron defeated and slew Ethelhelm, the ealderman, in Dorsetshire. Hercbert, who held the same rank, was slain the following year, among the Marshlanders, and his people routed: we read then of great slaughter in Lindsey, and East Anglia, and Kent; then at London, and at Canterbury, and at Rochester. Ethelwulph in person attacked a force which had landed from five and thirty

A. D. 838. 839.

* Sax. Chron. 90.

ships at Charmouth; but they remained masters of the place.* "Long time and often assailing the land on every side," says the chronicler, "now invading it in this place, and now in that, the Danes did not at the first so much covet to conquer it as to spoil it; nor to bear rule in it, as to waste and destroy it. If they were at any time overcome, the victors were nothing the more in quiet, for a new navy and a greater army were ready to make some new invasion; neither did they enter it all at one place, nor at once, but one company on the east side and one on the west, or on the north and south coasts, in such sort that the Englishmen knew not whither they should first go to make resistance against them."†

The English, however, were not yet wanting either in courage or in conduct. The Somersetshire men under the ealderman Eanwulf, and the Dorsetshire men under the ealderman Osric, and Ealstan bishop of Sherborn, met and defeated an army of invaders at the mouth of the Bridgewater river.‡ The heathens (for by that name the Northmen were often called, because of the ferocious hatred which they displayed against Christianity and its professors) suffered another memorable defeat at Wicganburgh in Devonshire; and in the same year, nine of their ships were taken at Sandwich, and the rest of their fleet dispersed by Æthelstan the royalet of Kent (whose name never occurs afterwards), and by Ealchere the ealderman. The victory must have been incomplete, or over an inconsiderable part of their forces; for a fleet of three hundred and fifty ships entered the Thames that year; the Northmen landed, plundered Canterbury and London, routed the Mercians under their king Bertulph, and then turned southward over the Thames into Surrey. There, at a place called Aclea, that is to say Oakley, or the field of oaks, king Ethelwulph and his son Ethelbald, with the force of Wessex, met and defeated them with greater

A.D. 843.

851.

* Sax. Chron. 90, 91. † Holinshed, i. 660.
‡ Sax. Chron. 92.

slaughter than ever before, or for many years after, was heard of in this island.*. Nevertheless, the Danes this year, for the first time, wintered here, in the isle of Thanet, where their predecessors, on whose posterity they were now, as it seemed, visiting the sins of their fathers, had first established themselves. They were attacked there by the Kentish men and the men of Surrey, under their ealdermen Ealchere and Huda: in this battle many on both sides were slain or drowned, and both the Saxon chiefs fell; but though the Danes were defeated, either the remainder of their force, or a fresh body of invaders, wintered in the isle of Shepey. There it was that Ethelwulph, with the advice of his bishops and nobles, granted a charter of ecclesiastical immunities, which some have supposed to be the original grant of tithes of all England, but of which the exact meaning and extent cannot with any certainty be determined† from the copies which have been preserved. The grant was made as "a wholesome counsel of general remedy," "seeing," said the king, "that perilous times are pressing on us; that there are in our days hostile burnings and plunderings of our wealth, a most cruel depredation by devastating enemies, and many tribulations from barbarous and pagan nations, threatening even our destruction."‡

But Ethelwulph, though he thus fully understood the perilous state of his kingdoms, seems, when he granted this charter, to have rested upon the merit of so good a work. Taking advantage of a short intermission of invasion, he went to Rome, and took with him his youngest son, Alfred, then in the seventh year of his age. There he remained a year, and on his way homeward through France he married Judith,§ daughter of Charles the Bald; a marriage which his time of life rendered unseemly, and which gave Ethelbald, his eldest son, a plea for forming a party to depose him. The popular pretext was, that he had crowned her, and used to seat her

* Sax. Chron. 92, 93.
† Ibid. 94.
‡ Turner's Anglo-Saxons, i. 509.
§ William of Malmesbury, 123.

beside him on the throne or in a chair of state, contrary to a law said to have been made in consequence of the crimes of Offa's daughter Eadburga, forbidding, for her sake, that the wife of a king should either be seated beside him or called queen. But the real cause was a suspicion that Alfred, child as he was, being the father's favourite, would be appointed to succeed him; and Ethelbald had determined to secure himself against such an act of injustice by dispossessing the old king of his authority. There were loyal hearts and hands enough to have supported the old man: but to have engaged in what he rightly deemed a worse than civil war, would ill have accorded with the lessons he had received in his youth, and the gentle disposition with which God had blessed him. He addressed the force which had assembled to maintain his cause, in a mild, conciliatory speech, dismissed them in peace, and consented to a partition of his dominions; Ethelbald taking for himself the western and better part, and relegating his father to those eastern provinces which had been Æthelstan's portion.* A.D. 856.

Ethelwulph soon died, and Ethelbald survived him only two or three years; the next brother, Ethelbert, then succeeded to the whole of his father's dominions. Ethelwulph's last exertions against the Northmen seem to have deterred them a little while from repeating their invasions; but he had expended, in costly presents to the pope, and in largesses to the Roman clergy and to the people of Rome, treasures which a more politic king would have employed in raising a naval force for the protection of his country; and Ethelbert had not reigned long before a large fleet of Vikingr came up the Southampton river, landed, and stormed the city of Winchester. But the Hampshire and Berkshire men 860. collected under the ealdermen Osric and Ethelwulph, advanced to meet them, gave them battle, and put them to flight. The pirates made for their ships, and coasting round, took up their winter quarters once more in the isle of Thanet. Hitherto there had been no want

* William of Malmesbury, 113. 122. Turner, i. 513—515.

of courage in the Anglo-Saxons, nor of that common sense by which, if there were no worthier motives, brave men are induced to defend their country. A want of both was first betrayed during this king's reign, and by the men of Kent, who made a truce with these Danes, gave them hostages, and promised money. The Danes thought they could take for themselves more than the Kentish men would give, and having deceived them by entering into such a negotiation, they stole a night march from their camp and over-ran the whole province eastward. But this roused the Kentish men; they mustered in force, and drove out the ravagers.*

The base example of purchasing a deceitful respite from such invasions had been set the Kentish men by the grandson of Charlemagne, Charles the Bald; it was soon followed by some of their degenerate countrymen.

A.D. 865. Ethelbert followed his brother to an early grave; and in the first year of Ethelred, the eldest of the two surviving brethren, a large heathen force invaded the eastern coast, and wintered in East Anglia, where the inhabitants made peace with them; that is to say, submitted to them.

866. Here the chronicle says they were horsed.† To keep a firm seat on horseback was among the accomplishments on which a Scandinavian hero‡ prided himself; but that a whole host of sea rovers, trained, as it is certain that they were, from childhood to the sea service, should be able to act on horseback like Cossacks or Pindarrees, and that, in a country so wasted by invasions and by intestine wars, horses enough for mounting them should be found, are facts which, though not to be doubted, are not easily to be explained. The Danes, we know, came at this time in large numbers; and the number of horses which could speedily be brought together upon their requisition implies a greater population and a greater state of agricultural prosperity than, from other circumstances, might be supposed to have existed. The army crossed the Humber and advanced towards

* Sax. Chron. 96, 97. William of Malmesbury, 127.
† Sax. Chron. 97.
‡ Complaint of Harold. Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, 78.

York, then, as it had been in the time of the Romans, a place of great importance. The Northumbrian Anglo-Saxons,..for there were already Danes established in that land,.. had been consuming their strength in a struggle between the rival roytelets, Osbert and Ella by name. On this emergency, there was enough sense in the people and generosity in the chiefs to suspend their strife, and unite against the common enemy. They met them at York, and the city itself became the scene of battle. Whether the Danes were in possession there, and the Northumbrians entered it by assault, or whether the latter, having sustained a defeat, retreated into it as to a strong hold, is rendered doubtful by contradictory statements*: but the result was, that the city was burnt by the Danes; that both the Northumbrian chiefs were slain; that the greater part of their followers perished by the sword, or more miserably by the flames; and that they who escaped death submitted to the invaders.

Ethelred, like his elder brethren, was a man well suited to his times; so bravely and so strenuously had they contended for their country, that it is not imputable to them that their valour did not succeed in its object. But the Danes were masters of the four seas; they could land at will; they had now countrymen established in various parts of the island, tributaries or confederates in others; and when they were defeated, they had nothing but lives to lose which the next fleet replaced. To follow the series of their battles would be to write the history of England during these ages. In the last year of his short and restless reign, Ethelred fought nine general battles with them south of the Thames; the less important actions in which he, and Alfred his brother, and the ealdermen, and the thanes, were engaged, were so continual that the annalist forbore to note them. Some great and signal victories they obtained; one of the Danish kings fell in battle, nine of their earls, and of the commonalty without number; but the invaders

* Sax. Chron. 98. William of Malmesbury, 129.

had hope, and enterprise, and perseverance on their side, while provincial jealousies distracted the Anglo-Saxons. The Mercians purchased a separate peace; the East Anglians, who had striven to throw off the yoke, were compelled a second time to submit, after their brave king Edmund had been put to death, in hatred as much of his religion as of his person. And when Ethelred died, in the sixth year of his reign, and Alfred, the only surviving son of Ethelwulph, succeeded, even the West Saxons, who had till then shown themselves the bravest of the land, submitted.

A.D. 871.

The life of Alfred is the most beautiful part of English history. There is no other name so justly canonized by the love and reverence of succeeding ages for all that is admirable in a sovereign, all that is amiable in an individual; his struggles, his wisdom, his virtues, his sufferings;.. all that he did, and all that he attempted or designed to do. But it is only the naval transactions of his reign that appertain to the purpose of the present work, and these exhibit the comprehensiveness of mind which so eminently characterised him. When his fortunes were almost at the lowest ebb, he fitted out a few ships*, put to sea in them, and encountered a squadron of seven vessels; one he captured, the others escaped by flight. The elements gave him a far greater advantage two years afterwards. The Danes had got possession of Wareham, at that time a strong place; Alfred was weak enough then in policy as well as in means to purchase peace from them, and to think that he secured it by exacting an oath from them upon their holy bracelet, which it was thought they esteemed the most sacred of all pledges, and which they had never plighted before; he swore them also upon some relics. The Northmen regarded one as little as the other; and while his forces trusted to the peace, they surprised them by night, slew his cavalry, mounted their own people on the horses which they had so treacherously obtained, hastened westward, and got possession of Exeter. A large fleet, going with the intent of reinforcing them there, was

867.

* Sax. Chron 103.

enveloped in a fog, and one hundred and twenty of their ships were wrecked in Swanage Bay. The force at Exeter then found it expedient to enter into a new negotiation: they again swore that they would depart from the kingdom, and gave hostages for the performance of the engagement, which they observed as faithlessly as they had done all former ones; for in the following year they over-ran the whole of Wessex, took possession of it, drove many of the people over sea, and hunted down the others or reduced them to submission *, Alfred being fain to conceal himself in the moors.

When Alfred, after those adventures, which impart to his history a charm like that of romance, had re-appeared, given the Danes, in Wessex, a signal defeat, compelled Guthrum their king to receive baptism †, and driven others of them out of the land, he resumed his schemes of maritime defence, went again to sea, and, meeting with four pirates, took them all; the whole crews of two being slain, and a great part of the others before they surrendered. Having expelled the Northmen from London ‡, and from Rochester, where they erected a fortress, he sent a fleet from Kent to act against them on the East Anglian coast. At the mouth of Harwich river the squadron engaged sixteen Danish ships, took them all, and slew the whole of their crews; but as they were returning with the booty they fell in with a large fleet of the Vikingr, and after a second engagement were themselves defeated. § Alfred now fortified London. At this time the whole English nation, except those who were held in subjection by the Danes, are said to have acknowledged him as king ‖; and by this something more than a recognition of his superiority as Bretwalda seems to be meant. The remaining states of the heptarchy which had hitherto retained their own kings, probably felt that they were better protected by being

A.D. 882.

885.

* Sax. Chron. 104. Turner's Anglo-Saxons, ii. 50, 53.

† Sax. Chron. 107.

‡ "The Englishmen," says Holinshed, "that were inhabitants thereof, gladly received him, rejoicing that there was such a prince bred of their nation that was of power able to reduce them into liberty," i. 672.

§ Sax. Chron. 108. ‖ Ibid. 110.

annexed to the kingdom of Wessex; but, strengthened as he thus was, and high in reputation as he now stood, and skilful as he had become in war both by sea and by land, all his efforts were required against the most able and most enterprising man that had yet appeared among the Vikingr, Hastings, whose name at this day exists among us as the title of a noble family, probably, if not with absolute certainty, derived from him. He is first heard of as being so skilful a seaman that Regner Lodbrog made choice of him to train up one of his sons as a sea rover. The grandson of Charlemagne bought of him a precarious peace for France; and he is then said to have sailed for Italy, upon the bold hope of winning the city of Rome, and with it the imperial dignity for his master. But so little was his knowledge commensurate with his ambition, that he mistook a city called Luna, for that which had so long been the seat of empire, attacked it, took it, and returned when he had discovered his mistake, and knew not how to proceed.

A.D. 879. After having again been for many years the scourge of France, he made his first recorded attempt upon England, and seated himself for about a year at Fulham; from whence he made for the coast of Flanders, sailed up the Scheldt to Ghent, and took an active part in those hostilities by which that part of the continent was ravaged; but being defeated at length by the imperial forces, he marched to Boulogne, constructed a large fleet there, and sailed once more to try his fortunes in

893. England; hoping, it has been supposed, if not to conquer that country, at least to divide it, and make himself be chosen king of the Anglo-Danes, the Northmen having then no other chieftain of equal celebrity.

Alfred was evidently not prepared for such an invasion. The Dane crossed from Boulogne with 250 ships, large enough to bring his horses with him, landed at Hithe, the Portus Lemanis of the Romans, then called Lemene*, marched to Appledore, where he easily got pos-

* The Saxon Chronicle (p. 114.) makes him enter Lemene-mouth, which is in East Kent, at the east end of the great wood called Andred; and says,

session of an old fort, ill constructed, and not better defended; left part of his force there in a winter camp, then sailing himself with eighty ships up the Thames, he navigated them into the East Swale, landed at Milton, and there intrenched another camp, the vestiges of which remained for many ages. The two camps were but about twenty miles asunder, and the fertile parts of Kent* lay at their mercy, while the sea covered the left of their position, and the river their right, for the opposite coast of Essex was possessed by the East Anglian Danes. They, as well as their Northumbrian countrymen, had recently engaged themselves to Alfred by oath, not to break their peace with him, and the East Anglians had given him hostages: but they regarded the fate of their hostages as little as the sanction of their oath; and Hastings well knew that he was in no danger of molestation from them at any time, and that whenever a favourable opportunity occurred they would act as his confederates. He knew, also, that as soon as it

" that the Danes towed their ships up as far as the Weald, four miles from the mouth of the river." This river has been supposed to be the Rother, an opinion which Drayton follows. I have preferred the authority of Selden, who, in his commentary upon this part of the Polyolbion, shows that Rye cannot have been the Portus Lemanis; and that in the oldest authority (Ethelwerd) " no river, but a port only, is spoken of; and that the ships were left in the haven."—" The words of this Ethelwerd," he says, " I respect much more than the later stories, and I would advise my reader to incline so with me."

* I know not whence Drayton derived his statement, that, in consequence of this invasion, the natives began to clear and cultivate the great forest, vestiges of which still remain in the Wealds of Kent and Sussex. They were compelled to this, he says, by the Danes: —

" Old Andred's Weald at length doth take her time to tell,
The changes of the world that since her youth befell,
When yet upon her soil scarce human foot had trod:
A place where only then the Sylvans made abode,
Where, fearless of the hunt, the hart securely stood,
And every where walk'd free — a burgess of the wood;
Until those Danish routs, whom hunger starv'd at home,
Like wolves pursuing prey, about the world did roam;
And stemming the rude stream dividing us from France,
Into the spacious mouth of Rotter fell, by chance,
That Lemen then was named; when, with most irksome care,
The heavy Danish yoke the servile English bare;
And when at last she found there was no way to leave
Those whom she had at first been forced to receive,
And by her great resort she was, through very need,
Constrained to provide her peopled towns to feed,
She learn'd the churlish axe, and twybill to prepare,
To steel the coulter's edge, and sharp the furrowing share."—*Song* 18.

was bruited abroad in the north that he had established himself in Kent, as Hengist and the first invaders had done before him, he should continually be joined by roving squadrons of his countrymen.*

The East Anglians presently manifested their wonted contempt of treaties; but Alfred disregarding them, and trusting London to its recent fortifications and its own means of defence against them, he collected his forces, and encamped between the two divisions of the Danes, at the nearest point where he could find a position defended on the one flank by the wood, and by water on the other, so that he might strike a blow against either army, if they ventured to take the field against him. Hastings and those who acted under the Vikingr's command were too wary to afford him any such advantage: they confined themselves to marauding inroads wherever the land was defenceless. But the bands who were thus employed were encountered by other bands appointed to this service, either from the king's army, or from the towns, who were night and day upon the alert, so that, although the Danes collected much booty, it was not with impunity. In those ages of desultory warfare, a campaign conducted with wariness and patience on both sides is proof of extraordinary ability in both; but the Vikingr was now a veteran commander by land as well as sea; and Alfred, who had formerly been censured for temerity, had corrected this as well as all the other errors of his youth. Against such an enemy as Hastings he prepared not for a sudden effort but for a long war: mustering, therefore, a sufficient force, he divided it into two parts, who relieved each other at stated times, half being always in service, and half pursuing their customary occupations at home. Hastings was at this time as little master by water as by land, for he saw no other means of securing his plunder than by conveying it into Essex, and there meeting his ships upon the East Anglian coast; but he had no means of crossing the Thames, except by marching far up into

A.D. 894.

* Turner, ii. 106, 107.

the country, and to attempt this with any good hope of success, it was necessary to deceive Alfred and unite his forces. In this he succeeded, by treating with him and engaging to leave the country*; and in proof of sincerity, he sent two of his sons to be baptized, and, if Alfred thought fit, retained as hostages. Baptized they were, Alfred taking the one child for his godson, and his son-in-law, the ealderman Ethered, the other; the king then gave them many presents, and with this generous treatment sent them back to their father. While Alfred listened to these proposals, the Danes broke up from their encampment at Appledore, passed his army, leaving it far on their right, and made for the Thames at some fordable place. Some such perfidy on their part had been suspected, for Alfred was close in pursuit; and his son Edward, with a force which he had collected, moved upon the same point. They came up with the invaders at Farnham, attacked and routed them, recovered from them their spoils, and drove them as far as the Thames, where they had no time to seek for a ford, but swam it they who could: their chief, who was desperately wounded, was carried over on horseback. These were men who, even when defeated, lost neither their courage nor their presence of mind: though flying before a victorious enemy they kept together in force; and being pursued into Essex, and across it, where they probably found countrymen to succour them, they got into the Isle of Mersey; a place so defensible, that it has been said, it "may be almost kept against all the world."† The advanced part of Alfred's army beset them there, and continued this sort of land blockade as long as they had food: but, in the words of the Saxon Chronicle, these besiegers "had their time set and their meat noted;" and when the time expired, and their rations failed, they broke up the siege, not waiting to communicate with the king, who, as he advanced thither with other forces, met them returning home.* He, how-

* Turner, ii. 108—110. Sax. Chron. 114, 115.
† Gibson's Camden, viii. 359.

ever, proceeded toward the isle, from whence the Danes had made no attempt to effect their escape, because their chief was not in a condition to bear removal*; a fact which is proof of both honour and humanity among themselves.

While Alfred was preparing to renew the blockade, he received intelligence that the East Anglian and Northumbrian Danes had made a powerful diversion in favour of their countrymen. One fleet of forty sail, which went north about (and possibly may have come directly from the Baltic), reached the Bristol Channel, and then laid siege to some strong place on the coast of Devonshire; while a hundred sail, collected on the eastern coast, sailed to the south, went down the Channel, and, disembarking on the south coast of the same county, besieged Exeter. There was no part of Alfred's dominions in which the Danes could fix themselves with greater danger to him, nor with greater convenience to themselves, that county being accessible by sea on two sides, and having neighbours, both in Cornwall and on the opposite coast of Wales, from whom good will, if not active assistance, might be expected. Leaving, therefore, the siege of Mersey island to be carried on by the forces of the country, he hastened into Devonshire. The Danes in the island sued for peace †, and promised to leave England; a promise which, with whatever fidelity it might be observed, it suited the English to accept, the alternative at this time being whether they should choose to be duped or defeated. For Hastings, when the other division of his army broke up from Appledore, got out of the Swale, crossed the Thames, and began to erect a fortification at South Benfleet, near Canvey isle, on the Essex shore; where, regardless of their engagement, the Danes from the Isle of Mersey joined him. But while he was on an expedition from thence, harassing the land, the eastern army, who had been fain to withdraw from their blockade, were reinforced by the Londoners, and by men from the west;

* Sax. Chron. 116.

† Turner, ii. 111, 112. Sax. Chron. 116.

and their united forces attacked the works at Benfleet*, broke them down, and took all that was therein; the women and children of the invaders, among them Hastings's wife and her two sons, and the money and other spoils which he had collected. They either took, burnt, or otherwise destroyed the ships which they found there, carrying some of their prizes to London, some to Rochester. The wife and children of Hastings they sent to the king, and he sent them safely back to the Vikingr: the Saxon Chronicler says that he did this because of the relationship which he had contracted toward them at their baptism; but it is less likely that Alfred should have been influenced by that consideration, or by the vain hope that any act of generosity could affect an enemy like Hastings, than that he obeyed the impulse of a benevolent heart, obeying at the same time the dictates of a religion which he believed and loved.†

The Vikingr could not mistake this for an effect of fear, but probably he ascribed it to superstition: courtesy, humanity, and kindness towards an enemy were to him unintelligible notions. Collecting his scattered parties, he took possession of Sceobyrig, now the village of South Shobery, near the south-eastern point of Essex, and there constructed defensive works, the remains of which may still be traced. There too the loss which he had sustained in ships and men was more than replaced by the arrival of succours from East Anglia and Northumbria. Thus reinforced, and thinking to strike terror into the heart of England, as he had often done into that of France, Hastings sailed up the Thames as far as his vessels could ascend it, and sending them back to his station on the eastern coast, entered Mercia, and, plundering on all sides, proceeded toward the Severn, not improbably expecting that the Welsh would join him when he ap-

* I depart here, not without diffidence, from Mr. Turner's account of these transactions. According to him it was the camp at Milton which was thus attacked and taken; and the capture of the Benfleet fortress, in which the wife and children were also taken, again to be restored, occurred afterwards. But confused as the Saxon Chronicle is in these details, it distinctly authorises the statement in the text.

† Turner, ii. 112—114. Sax. Chron. 115—117.

proached their country. The ealdermen and the king's thanes summoned against these invaders the men of every town from the east of Pedredan, (now South Petherton, where Ina, the greatest of Alfred's predecessors, had a palace,) and from the west of Selwood, and from the parts east and north of the Thames, and from the west of the Severn. This comprised the whole disposable force of Mercia and Wessex, except those men of Wessex who were then serving in their own country under the king: men were also summoned from some part of North Wales, which at that time acknowledged Alfred's authority. With this force they pursued the enemy, overtook him at Buttington, on the Severn (near Welshpool), and there beleaguered him. Hastings threw up works on both sides of the river, but on both sides he was beset: he had no vessels, neither had he any means of obtaining supplies when his provisions began to fail. Some expectation of relief he must have entertained, for he remained there many weeks, till they had eaten most of their horses, and the others had died of hunger. He then made a desperate effort to break through the blockading force on the eastern side: many of the king's thanes fell, and many of the Northmen. The Saxon Chronicle claims a victory; but Hastings effected his object; and it is evident that he was not pursued with the same activity in his flight as on his advance, for he reached his stronghold at Sceobyrig without farther molestation.*

There he found the ships which he had sent back from the upper Thames, and there he probably found also the remains of the larger fleet from Devonshire. For when Alfred approached Exeter, the Danes hastily broke up the siege, re-embarked, and made sail up the Channel: they landed on the coast of Sussex, and attacked Chichester; but the townsmen made a brave defence, put them to flight, slew many hundreds, pursued them to the water, and took some of their ships†; the rest pro-

* Turner, ii. 115—117. Sax. Chron. 118.
† Ibid. 120.

ceeded toward the eastern coast. A great change had now been wrought in the relative strength of the contending parties: the Northmen, who some years before had made this island the chief, if not the only object of their ambition, were attracted now toward France and the Mediterranean, where they found richer countries, a better climate, and less resistance. The English, on the other hand, under the wise arrangements of their king, had learnt order as well as confidence in themselves, and were ready as well to attack as to resist.* It was only from the Anglo-Danes that Hastings received any efficient aid: they seem, in full reliance upon his enterprising talents, to have supplied it zealously. With their assistance he collected a great force before the winter came on; and, committing the women, the ships, and the booty, to the East-Anglian Danes, he made a rapid movement across the island, marching on the stretch, it is said, day and night, to Chester.† The English army followed, and with good speed, but could not come up with him till he was within the walls of that, even then, ancient city; but they slew such of his men as they overtook, drove away all the cattle from the vicinity as well as all that the marauders had collected, and burnt the corn or trampled it down with their horses. They did not persevere in besieging him; the arrangement for supporting an army in the field was too imperfect for this; and Hastings, when the country was thus laid waste around him, was as little able to establish himself there; which, if he could have done, the whole north of England would have been under the dominion of the Danes; and this was, probably, his object now, and in his former expedition. Necessity compelled him to abandon it: he made an inroad into Wales, swept it of what he could collect there; but not attempting to hold Chester, nor to march again through Mercia, where an active enemy

A. D. 895

* William of Malmesbury, 134.

† Spelman has mistaken this for Leicester, as Mr. Turner (ii. 119.) has shown. The Saxon Chronicle makes this certain, — "a western city in Wirheal, which is called Lega-craster," p. 119. That part of Cheshire which lies between the estuaries of the Dee and the Mersey is called the Wirall.

would have encountered him, he took a circuitous course through Northumbria into East Anglia, and so to the former quarters of his countrymen in the Isle of Mersey.*

Thus far the Vikingr had lost little in reputation, and he had abated nothing of his hopes. Before the winter he towed his ships from the Thames into the Lea, and erected a fortress upon that river twenty miles above London, . . it is doubtful whether at Ware or at Hertford. A great body of the Londoners, and of others whom they called to their assistance, attacked these dangerous neighbours in their stronghold, but they were defeated in the attempt, and four of the king's thanes fell. This occurred during the summer; and when harvest-time approached Alfred deemed it necessary to encamp in person near the city while the people reaped their corn, that the Danes might not despoil them of the crop. He then formed a plan, which if the favourable season did not suggest to him it enabled him to accomplish, that of digging three new channels for the waters of the Lea, whereby he rendered it impossible for the Danes to bring out their vessels; and to protect the men who were employed in these cuts, he erected works on each side of the river, and encamped in the vicinity. He succeeded in his purpose; but the navigation of the river in that part was obstructed till after about seven hundred years it was restored to its old channel, chiefly by lord Burleigh's means.† Not waiting then to be attacked by a stronger and better directed force than that of the Londoners, the Danes sent their women to the care of their countrymen in East Anglia, and once more made their devastating way through the midland counties to the Severn. Alfred pursued them, while the citizens made spoil of the deserted ships. He found them at Quatbridge (probably the present Bridgenorth), and so fortified, that he made no attempt to molest them in their intrenchments: but they seem to have been confined there, and the spirit, and perhaps the health, of his able enemy was now broken;

A.D. 896.

* Sax Chron. 119, 120. Turner, ii. 118—120.
† Camden, 296.

for in the ensuing summer his army dispersed, some going into Northumbria, some to East Anglia, and those who had not enriched themselves with plunder taking again to the seas. Hastings himself went to France, obtained a grant of territories there from the king, and was living there in peace when his countryman, Rollo, invaded Normandy.*

The conclusion of this war against a maritime invader connects it with an important circumstance in the naval history of England. The marauders, who had been driven beyond the Humber and the Ouse, thought to revenge themselves by sea for the defeats and disappointments which they had sustained on shore, and they harassed the south coast of Wessex by frequent descents: these expeditions were mostly made in certain vessels called æsces †, which they had built many years before, and which seem to have been of a different construction from those in common use, probably longer and of greater burden. The Northmen were bolder and better sailors than the Gauls and Britons; but their vessels were of a ruder structure than those which Cæsar encountered in his war with the Veneti: like them, they were broad-bottomed ‡; but their keels were framed of light timber, and the sides and upper works were of wicker, covered with strong hides; coracles, in fact, upon a large scale, and with a wooden keel. The æscs were superior, it seems, not

* Sax. Chron. 120, 121. Turner, ii. 120—125.

† Sax. Chron. 122. Whatever these vessels may have been, the sea-rovers who were called Ascomanni may perhaps have derived their name from them: this seems a more likely dervation than is given by Holberg, who says they were so called because they carried their food with them in chests, " æsker, en ny Sect af Soe-Rivere kalden Ascomanni, efterdi de førte deres victualier med sig udo æsker," i. 101. This opinion of mine is confirmed by Ihre (sub voce Ask). For the word æsc itself he gives various etymologies; but inclines to think the simplest the most probable, that vessels built of ash (ask) were so called, " ut apud poëtas Latinos abies et pinus pro ipsis naviglis posita inveniuntur."

‡ Gibbon, iv. 288. (8vo. edit.) Sidonius, there quoted (in Panegyr. Avit. 369.), describes the Saxon pirate: —

" —— Cui pelle salum sulcare Britannum
Ludus et assuto glaucum mare findere lembo."

The Saxon Chronicle (p. 115) says, that three Scots stole away from Ireland in a boat without oars, made of two hides and a half. They fled their country that they might live in a state of pilgrimage, they cared not where; and they took only a week's provisions. Within the week they landed in Cornwall, and were sent to Alfred.

only to these, but to any of Alfred's ships; for he gave orders that long ships should be built to act against them, full nigh twice as long as those which they were to engage. "Some," says the Saxon annalist, "had sixty oars, some more, and they were both swifter and less unsteady, and also higher than the others. They were neither made after the Frisian nor the Danish manner, but so as he himself thought that they might be most serviceable." * From this description, which is the only one that has been transmitted to us, it is evident that they were galleys, such as were used in the Mediterranean †, and of which a model might easily be obtained. However little suited for general service in the British seas, they were well adapted for defending the coast, and for attacking squadrons of greater collected force, but consisting of ships less manageable, under all circumstances, and individually far inferior in size.

Nine of these galleys Alfred manned partly with Frieslanders, always a brave and hardy people, and then so noted for their maritime skill, that their ships were accounted among the best in the north. He sent them in pursuit of six of the Anglo-Danish vessels, which going first to the Isle of Wight, and then to Devonshire, committed great ravages every where on the coast. They found them at the mouth of some river: three of their vessels were aground, having been left by the tide, and the men had landed from them; the other three, seeing that it was intended to prevent their escape, stood boldly out and gave battle. Alfred had ordered his people to take as many as they could alive; for he had determined now upon treating the sea rovers not as enemies, entitled to the laws of war, but as robbers punishable with death. The kings of Denmark themselves had begun to treat them thus, so into-

* Sax. Chron. 122. Selden, ii. 1314.

† It is remarkable that Campbell, though he perceives this, should nevertheless say they were of a new construction, devised by Alfred himself. Hist. of the Admirals, i. 36.

About the year 1540, Gustavus Vasa sent for Venetian shipwrights to build for him, in the Swedish ports, galleys of two, three, and four banks of oars, as the best vessels for acting against the Muscovite and Esthonian pirates. Olaus Magnus. Basiliæ, 1567. l. x. c. iii. p. 439.

lerable had the system of piracy become, even to the countries where it originated. But these orders were either disregarded in the heat of fight, or the Danes fought with a desperation which rendered it impossible to regard them: on board two of their ships every man was killed, all but five in the third, and these were severely wounded, yet they got off with their ship. There was either a great error of judgment in Alfred's commanders, or the galleys were ill navigated by men who, though excellent sailors, were not accustomed to such vessels; for upon making toward the bay where the other pirates were aground, three of the galleys got aground near them, and were there left by the tide, so that they could receive no support from their comrades. The Danes, seizing the opportunity, attacked them on the sand: in the severe conflict which ensued 62 English and Frieslanders fell: among the latter three were of sufficient eminence to have their names recorded; among the former, were Lucumon, the king's Reeve, and Ethelforth, the king's neat-herd. On the part of the Danes 120 fell; they were inferior in numbers, but the advantage in skill was on their side; and the tide floated their vessels before the galleys could be moved, so that they were enabled to push out and endeavour to escape. As far as the galleys were concerned they effected this; but they were so weakened by their loss, and so many of the remaining crews were wounded, that only one of them reached an East-Anglian port; the others were driven ashore on the coast of Sussex, because the men were unable to navigate them: the crews were sent to the king at Winchester, and he ordered them to be hanged. In the course of the year twenty Danish ships were captured, and the men executed as pirates. After this England enjoyed, for about three generations, a respite from such hostilities.*

Alfred, then, was the first English king who established a naval force; and as he went out with his first fleet himself, he may, without impropriety, be considered as the first English admiral. He invited into his navy

* Sax. Chron. 122—124. Turner, ii. 123—125. Campb. i. 36—38. Hen. ii. 411. (Dublin edit.) Charnock's Hist. of Marine Architecture, i. 260—262.

not Frieslanders alone, who were probably at the time his allies, but adventurers of whatever nation who were willing to forsake a piratical course of life.* But he well knew that though great present advantage might be derived from their services, no durable power could be established by such precarious means; and that it is only by maritime commerce that maritime dominion can be supported. On this, as on all other subjects, his views extended not only beyond those of his contemporaries, but it may almost be said, beyond the possibilities of his age. He sent an ambassador to India, to the Christians in Malabar, and on the Coromandel coast, countries which no Englishman visited again till the 16th century; and whether the navigators made their voyage in his service † or not, he obtained from Wulfstan an account of the manners and political state of the countries towards the east of the Baltic; and from Ohthere a description of the land as far as the White Sea and the mouths of the Dwina; parts which Richard Chanceler, in the year 1553, was the first European navigator who re-discovered.

Bede, Alfred, and Roger Bacon, are the three Englishmen who attained all the knowledge that in their respective times and stations it was possible for them to acquire, and who made the best use of that knowledge for posterity. Bede preserved for us the only materials

* "Impositisque piratis in illis, vias maris custodiendas commisit." Upon these words of Cæsar, Selden observes, "Piratarum hic vocabulo (quemadmodum alii illius ævi) usus est, non pro prædonibus, ut vulgo; sed pro iis qui hostium classes arte navali adgrederentur, et marinum defenderent territorium. De vocabuli etymo scholiastes vetus ad Sophoclis Ajacem: Πεῖρα, inquit 'Ἀττικῶς δόλος τέχνη, ὅθεν καὶ πειρᾶται οἱ κατὰ θάλασσαν πανοῦργοι: 'Pira Attice denotat dolum seu artem, unde et Piratæ dicuntur qui mare infestant.'" ii. 1313.

† It has been said that Ohthere's voyage was made by the king's direction; but the narrative, so far from confirming this, contains the sum of what he had learned in many expeditions. On one occasion he says, "he wished to find out how long that land stretched to the north, or whether any man abode to the north of those wastes." Elsewhere he says, "he went chiefly looking for the horse-whales (walrusses), because they have very good bone (ivory) in their teeth." *Turner*, ii. 224, 225. It has also been said, not by Mallet and Voltaire alone, from whom little research was to be expected, but by Campbell (i. 39.), on Spelman's alleged authority, that Ohthere's voyage was undertaken for the discovery of a north-east passage to India. It is surprising that so plain a statement as Ohthere's can have been so egregiously misunderstood.

which exist for no inconsiderable nor unimportant portion of our national history. Roger Bacon anticipated some of the most momentous chemical discoveries which were made in after ages: he had a clear foresight of others; and it was in his then unpublished writings that his namesake, the more celebrated, but not the greater Bacon, found the principles of that experimental and inductive philosophy * distinctly stated, which he produced to the world as his own invention. No other sovereign ever manifested so earnest a desire for improving the moral and intellectual condition of his people as Alfred; no one ever entertained wider or wiser views of national defence; and modern legislation has nowhere yet attempted to institute a system of policy for the prevention of offences, and the security of persons and property, so efficacious as that which he established throughout his kingdom.

CHAP. II.

FROM THE DEATH OF ALFRED TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

Even Alfred's far-sighted wisdom could not procure peace for his country in an age of violence; but he procured for it strength, and renown, and prosperity, during three generations. Upon his death the Anglo-Danes would soon have made themselves lords of England, if his son Edward the elder, whom he left to succeed him, had not inherited much of his father's promptitude and vigour. They took up the cause of Ethelwold, who, as son of one of Alfred's elder brethren, claimed the succession: they received him

A.D. 901.

* For proof of this, the reader is referred to Mr. Forster's Mahommedanism Unveiled (vol. ii. pp. 312—318.), a work which will well repay an attentive perusal.

for their king, expecting thus to divide the English, and subdue one part by help of the other; but they were too rude or turbulent long to observe the respectful conduct towards him by which alone such views could be successfully pursued; and Ethelwold gathering a piratical force put to sea, and finding allies among the Northmen who had established themselves in France, returned with a great fleet, landed in Essex, which he subdued, persuaded the East-Anglian Danes to join him; and after ravaging part of Mercia and of Wessex, and being pursued by Edward to the fens in Lincolnshire, fell in a well-contested victory which he obtained over the rear of the king's retreating army. The peace with the Anglo-Danes which followed lasted only till they felt themselves strong enough to break it; and Edward then collected a fleet* of about 100 sail, with which to guard the south-eastern coast, probably against any new invasion on that side. The Danes thought that he had embarked the greatest part of his army in the fleet, and that they might go plundering whither they would without danger; but Edward, like his father, kept the land force of the country always in readiness. He sent troops both from Wessex and Mercia to pursue them, as they went on marauding from the Avon to the Severn: these troops intercepted them on their return, and defeated them with great slaughter; two of their kings, who were sons of Regner Lodbrog, and ten other chiefs, of sufficient note to have their names recorded†, falling in the battle.

A.D. 904. 905. 911.

The next invasion was from Armorica; but it was by a fleet of Northmen ‡, not of the Keltic and Christian

* Sax. Chron. 128. This authority does not justify Henry (who refers to it) in asserting, that Edward constantly kept up a fleet of 100 ships, with which he protected the trade of his subjects and maintained the dominion of the sea, ii. 413.

† Sax. Chron. 125—129. Turner, ii. 314—317.

‡ Lidwiccum they are called in the Saxon Chronicle. Mr. Ingram has a note upon this word, explaining it: "the inhabitants of Armorica, now Bretagne, so called because they abode day and night in their ships, from liða ship, and piccian, to watch or abide day and night." But the Armoricans are not likely to have been designated by an appellation derived from a Teutonic language; and the names of the two earls who commanded in this expedition are both Norse.

inhabitants of that country. They went west about, entered the Bristol channel, wasted the Welsh coast, and landing high up the Severn, entered Herefordshire in force, and there made a British bishop, Camalac by name, prisoner: the king ransomed him for forty pounds. He was taken in a part of that country called Irchenfeld*: the men of that district had by their bravery obtained the honourable privilege†, that "when the army was marching forward against the enemy, they were to form the avauntward, and in the return home the rereward." On this occasion they did not belie their renown; and when the Northmen would have pursued their devastating career, they, with the men of Hereford (then, it is supposed, newly founded by Edward) and of Gloucester, and of the nearest burghs or fortified places, gave them battle, slew one of their leaders and the brother of the other, put them to flight, drove them into a wood or park as it is called, and there beset them, till they engaged to depart from the realm, and gave hostages for their good faith. The king, who knew by his own experience and his father's what that faith was worth took care to guard his side of the Bristol channel well, from the mouth of the Somersetshire Avon downwards; nevertheless they landed twice with the intent of revenging themselves for their defeat, . . once above Watchet, a second time in Porlock bay. In both descents they were defeated with great slaughter; and the field of slaughter near the former place is still marked by three funeral mounds called Grab barrows.‡ The remainder took refuge in one of the islands in the channel §; and there they remained, probably confined there by stress of weather; but many of them died for want of food. At length they escaped to the Welsh coast ||, far down

A.D. 918.

* Ircinga-felda in the Sax. Chron. Archenfeld in Domesday.

† Gibson's Camden, 575.

‡ Beauties of England, xiii. 578.

§ One MS. of the Saxon Chronicle says the Flat-holms, another the Steep; the latter is most improbable: and Lundy a more likely place of retreat than the former.

|| To Deomodum, or Deomedum, which Mr. Ingram englishes Dimmet. Demetia is evidently meant, — the old appellation for what, in Camden's

the channel, and in the autumn made their way from thence to Ireland.*

Once, during the latter part of Edward's reign, the Anglo-Danes invited some Vikingr to their aid against him; but they were defeated at Maldon, and the king curbed them by a chain of fortresses, so judiciously placed, that they soon became inhabited towns. Upon the death of this able king, and of his eldest son, Ethelward, who survived him only a few days, the witenagemot chose his illegitimate son Athelstan, then thirty years of age, to succeed him. He proved the most successful and the most powerful of the Anglo-Saxon kings; and not only annexed Northumbria to his dominions, but compelled the Welsh kings and Constantine king of the Scots to acknowledge his supremacy. This was no willing submission on their part, and upon the first opportunity that seemed favourable, Constantine threw off his vassalage; but Athelstan was prepared both by sea and land, and while his army ravaged Scotland as far as Dunfoeder and Wertmore†, his fleet laid waste the coast as far as Caithness. The Scottish king again submitted, with as little intention of remaining subject as before, and with an exasperated desire of vengeance, for which he formed a more extensive confederacy than any that had ever before been brought into action upon the same theatre. The Anglo-Danes of East Anglia and Northumbria raised their Raven Standard against the English monarch. Eugenius, the royalet of Cumbria, joined them by necessity or by choice, and the Welsh princes with alacrity. Anlaf, the son of a Northumbrian king, came from Ireland, where he had obtained a sovereignty, in the hope of recovering what he looked upon as his inheritance: he entered the Humber with a fleet, which is said to have consisted of 615

A.D. 921. 925. 934.

time, was called West Wales, and comprehended the counties of Caermarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan.

* Sax Chron. 131, 132 Turner, ii 319.

† Both places are now unknown Wertermere, it was conjectured by Pinkerton, might be Westermere, the Western Sea, or Frith of Clyde. Palgrave's Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth, i. 473.

ships, and which seems, therefore, to have included the confederate forces from Norway and from the Baltic. Athelstan, on his part, was assisted by the Vikingr, with 300 companions, who were ready to serve on any side, and Rollo sent him an auxiliary force from Normandy. He defeated the confederates in the great battle of Brunnaburgh, in which, according to the contemporary poet, more bodies were left on the field for the yellow-footed kite, and the eagle, and the grizzly wolf of the weald, than had fallen under the edge of the sword in any battle since the Angles and Saxons first came over the broad sea. Five of the allied kings were slain, and seven of the northern earls. Constantine was one among the slain; and Athelstan became the first undoubted monarch of England, for the Anglo-Danes were completely subdued. This was a real conquest; and he was even nominal lord of Wales and Scotland.*

A.D. 938.

The first treaty † between France and England was made in this king's reign, who engaged therein to assist his nephew, king Louis d'Outremer, with a fleet against his ambitious nobles and Otho the king of Germany. The fleet, accordingly, appeared off the coast of Flanders as soon as Otho passed the Rhine; it protected the maritime cities, and made some descents for the sake of plunder upon the enemy's territory. This expedition, although not otherwise worthy of record, is remarkable as being the first instance in which an English fleet put to sea for any purpose relating to the affairs of the Continent. Hitherto, since the retreat of the Romans, there had been no political relation between this island and any of the continental states, except that its fugitive or exiled princes repaired, some

939.

* Turner, ii. 329—343 Sax. Chron. 140—145. Annales iv. Magistrorum apud O'Conor, Rerum Hibern. Script. iii. 463.

† "C'est le premier exemple que nous aïons dans notre histoire, non seulement d'un ligue offensive entre la France et l'Angleterre, mais encore le premier traité par lequel un de ces deux états soit entré dans les intérêts de l'autre. Jusque-là les deux roïaumes s'étoient regardés l'un l'autre comme deux mondes separés, qui n'avoient rien à démêler ensemble, excepté pour le commerce, et qui n'étoient, pour ainsi dire, ni amis ni ennemis pour tout le reste." — *P. Daniel*, ii. 647. edit. 1729.

of them, to France for an asylum, some to the Baltic for the aid of those freebooters who were ready to engage in any enterprise wherein a prospect of plunder was held out. But England had now made a great advance in power and in civilisation; and Athelstan, of whom it was said by the grateful people, after the lapse of many generations, that a more just or a more learned king had never governed the kingdom, encouraged commerce, like his illustrious grandfather Alfred, as the only means of keeping up that naval force which the country needed for its security and strength. With this view he established mints in all the considerable towns of Kent and Wessex, as well as in London, enjoining withal that there should be only one coinage throughout his dominions.* And in order to raise the mercantile character by making commerce a way to honour as well as to wealth, one of his laws enacted, that a merchant who made three voyages over the high seas, with a ship and cargo of his own, should from thenceforth enjoy the rank and privileges of a thane.† The king of Norway, Harold Harfagre, whose son, Haco the Good, was intrusted to Athelstan, that under his care he might be educated in a more civilised country than his own, sent the English king a ship with a golden beak and purple sails, and fitted up with its defences of gilded shields all round. In the selection of such a present, Harold probably considered as much what was most likely to gratify Athelstan's inclinations, as what could most advantageously display the skill of the Norwegians.‡

England had been greatly strengthened, and in a still greater degree improved, during the reign of three successive kings, who were equally remarkable for the wisdom of their measures, and for the vigour with which they pursued the objects of their steadfast policy. One of those objects they had effected: the English were no longer a divided people; throughout the former

* Canciani, Barbarorum Leges Antiquæ, iv. 262. Turner, ii. 606—614. Henry, ii 413.

† Canciani, iv. 268.

‡ William of Malmesbury, 155.

kingdoms of the polyarchy, wherever the population was English, the king of England was now not the nominal merely, but the real sovereign. But the Anglo-Danes occupied a large part of the land, and they had been conquered too recently for any approximation towards an union; there were little, if any, obstacles of language; little, if any, of religion; a great one in manners; and a greater in that cherished hatred and desire of vengeance which the recent conversion of the more barbarous race had left unmitigated as well as unsubdued. Athelstan's early death, and the accession of his brother Edmund the Elder, at the inexperienced age of eighteen, afforded them the opportunity for which they longed; and at their invitation, Anlaf sailed a second time from Ireland with a great armament, and entered the Humber. The Vikingr possessed in their habits and vocation surer means of raising and maintaining a naval force than the English government had at its command; the young king, who was totally unprepared at sea, found himself also inferior by land; and, after two defeats, he submitted to a dishonourable peace, whereby he divided his kingdom with Anlaf, resigning to him all the country north of Watling Street, with the condition, that whoever survived should become monarch of the whole.* The great disparity of age between them made this a favourable condition for Edmund; and Anlaf, who probably meant to keep the treaty no longer than till he could find an inviting opportunity for breaking it, or, perhaps, like many kings, took no care for any thing that might happen after his own time, died in the ensuing year.

A.D. 941.

The Vikingr again invaded England in the following reign. A son of Harold Harfagre, Eric by name, had, after his father's death, been driven from Norway for his crimes, having killed some of his brothers for the sake of their inheritance. The fratricide made for the Orkneys; collected, as it was easy to do, a predatory force; and began to plunder along the coast of Scot-

* Turner, ii. 366—368.

land. This was during Athelstan's life; and that king, though he had assisted his pupil Haco with a fleet which enabled him to expel Eric, sent, nevertheless, a message to Eric now, saying, that having been in strict friendship with the father, he desired to prove the sincerity of that friendship by showing kindness to the son; he invited him, therefore, to reign as his vassal in Northumbria. Subjects who were too turbulent to live contentedly under the government of Haco the Good, repaired thither to join him; his inclination accorded well with theirs, and he made it the amusement of his summer months to pirate upon the coasts of Scotland, the Hebrides, Ireland, and Wales. Having been expelled from Northumbria, either by Edmund or by the people, he took to the seas again, again found adventurers in the Orkneys, was joined also by some Vikingr among the Hebrides, and, after some descents upon Ireland and Wales, made again for England at the commencement of Edred's reign, and was received once more as their king by the restless Northumbrians. Edred, like his brother Edmund, had succeeded to the throne in youth, but no incapacity had yet appeared in the race of Cerdic. The revolt of these Anglo-Danes exasperated him, for they had just before sworn fidelity to him on his accession: he marched against them; and in the short but destructive war which ensued*, Eric and five other sea-kings met with the fate which they deserved. After this victory, Northumbria was partitioned into baronies and counties; and from this time it remained as inseparable a part of the English monarchy as Kent or Mercia.

A.D. 946.

During the short reign of Edwy the All-Fair, whose tragic story affords one of the finest subjects for an historical drama, nothing relating to naval affairs has been recorded; but in that of his brother and successor, Edgar, more than is true. A charter has been produced, in which he boasts of having, by divine assistance, subjected to the kingdom of England all the islands of

959.

* Turner, ii. 358. 270—376.

the ocean, with their ferocious kings, as far as Norway, and the greater part of Ireland, and its noble city of Dublin *: but of these conquests, this charter is the only evidence that exists; and its own authenticity seems, therefore, thus to be satisfactorily disproved. With equal exaggeration, and not on the incidental falsehood of a forged instrument, but in credulous history, he is said to have had three, and even four fleets, of 1200 ships each, stationed in the four seas, for the defence of the whole island.† One ancient writer states the whole force at 300; and even this would show a large increase in the course of half a century. It has been related also, that every year, as soon as the solemnities of Easter were over, he ordered these ships to be collected at their respective stations; cruised with the eastern fleet to the western part of the island; and then, dismissing that, proceeded himself with the eastern fleet to the north, and so again with the northern fleet to the east ‡, .. a parade of idle force, in which there would have been as little policy, as there is likelihood in the relation. It is also said of him, that he summoned the king of the Scots, the king of Cumbria, Macchus the archpirate, who was king of Anglesey and of the isles, and five other British kings, to meet him at Chester, and there do him homage: so far there is good authority § for the statement; and if Edgar's character were entitled to respect in other points, we

* Turner, ii. 419. Dugdale, Monast. i. 140.

† Henry, ii. 414. Campbell, i. 47. Turner, ii. 424.

‡ William of Malmesbury, 185.

§ Sax. Chron. 160. Selden, ii. 1315. "Ego Edgarus totius Albionis Basileus, necnon maritimorum seu insulanorum regum circumhabitantium, — titulus ei solennis erat." — *Ibid.* ii. 1324.

"Quin eodem ferme usos hosce fuisse consilio videtur, in firmando tutandoque tam oceani quam insulæ imperio, quod Germani veteres (quorum pars et Saxones et Dani) in civitatibus suis mediterraneis tuendis adhibere soliti. Apud eos enim maxima laus erat (quod scribit Cæsar) quam latissimas circum se vastatis finibus solitudines habere; hoc proprium virtutis existimantes, expulsos agris finitimos cedere, neque quemquam prope se audere consistere; simul hoc se fore tutiores arbitrantur, repentinæ incursiones timore sublato. Ita sane iis qui in Britanniâ rerum sunt tunc potiti, visum est latissima circumambientis oceani spatia sua reddere, circumnavigando, aliosque arcendo, veluti ab insulæ sive muro, sive pomærio." — *Mare Clausum, Seld.* Op. ii. 1326.

might hope that later writers have calumniated him, when they added to this *, that ordering them on board his vessel, and taking his seat at the prow, he compelled them to row him on the river Dee, in proud manifestation of his superior power: "then," he is reported to have said, "might his successors account themselves kings of England, when they enjoyed such prerogative of high and supreme honour."

Edgar is the hero of monastic writers, because he supported the monks in their usurpations upon the canons, having indeed made a covenant with them, that they should defend him against devils, and he would defend them against men.† It was said of him, in prose and verse, that no king of England, either of his own or former times, could be compared with him; and that ever while he lived he dwelt in peace, wielding all as pleased himself without resistance, kings and earls bowing submissively to all his claims.‡ Yet it appears that Westmoreland was ravaged during his reign, apparently by the Anglo-Danes §; and that Thanet-land was ravaged by his own orders, perhaps to punish the inhabitants for favouring the sea-rovers. Two years only after his death, a piratical squadron attacked Southampton, slew or carried into captivity most of the inhabitants, and laid waste the coast. In the same year, Thanet was over-run by the Vikingr, and the county of Chester also; Devon, Cornwall, and the coast of Wales, were infested in the following year; Dorsetshire in the next. A respite then occurs of five years, during which the great murrain of cattle first appeared in this island. The next invaders attacked Watchet; but here the people seem to have inherited the spirit of their fathers, and defeated them, though not without considerable loss, Goda, the thane of Devonshire, falling in the battle.|| This was the only instance in which the Danes were

A.D. 966. 959. 980. 982.

* William of Malmesbury, 170. Holinshed, i. 694. Turner, ii. 420. Palgrave, 249, 250.
† Turner, ii. 418. Spelman, Concil. 440.
‡ William of Malmesbury, 187. Sax. Chron. 151.
§ By Thored, the son of Gunner. Sax. Chron. 157.
|| Sax. Chron. 165—167.

successfully opposed, and almost the only one in which any vigour was exerted in opposing them. For . . though it was said that nothing could be more holy than Edgar's life, bating certain vices, and certain crimes (not of the lightest die) for which he did penance and was absolved; and though after a convenient interval of time miracles were worked by his remains, as if with a view to his canonization, . . that king was a voluptuary; and under his reign the English are said to have become a corrupted nation, undoubtedly in great measure owing to his example, for a licentious court never fails to make a licentious people. It is said, that his intimate intercourse with foreigners occasioned an importation of foreign vices; and that the English, who till his time had been a simple and a sober people, learnt drunkenness from the Danes, effeminacy from the Flemings, and from the Saxons what is denominated a disordered fierceness of mind.* These vices are not incompatible; and for introducing the corruption of manners in which they took root, it is admitted by his panegyrist that Edgar has been justly accused. The splendour of his kingdom died with him; the ostentatious strength in which he gloried, proved to be but a pageant in the hour of need; and one voluptuous reign undoing the good which had been effected by Alfred, and the elder Edward and Athelstan, (three of the ablest monarchs that ever reigned in succession) . . the people losing, in the course of one generation, their discipline and their courage, together with those habits in which their moral strength consisted, found themselves once more at the mercy of a maritime enemy. "This, by the way," says our old historian†, "is noteworthy; that the Danes had an imperfect, or rather a lame or limping rule in this land, so long as the governors were watchful, diligent, politic at home, and warlike abroad; but when these kind of kings discontinued, and that the reins of the regiment fell into the hands of a pezzant, not a puissant prince,

* William of Malmesbury, 171. Holinshed, i. 690.
† Holinshed, i. 702.

a man evil qualified, dissolute, slack, and licentious, not regarding the dignity of his own person, nor favouring the good estate of his people, the Danes, who before were coursed from coast to coast, and pursued from place to place, as more willing to leave the land than desirous to tarry in the same, took occasion of stomach and courage to re-enter this isle; and waxing more bold and confident, more desperate and venturous, spared no force, omitted no opportunity, let slip no advantage that they might possibly take, to put in practice, and fully to accomplish, their long conceived purpose."

But to suppose that the Danes had ever before this time entertained any purpose of conquering England, or that at this time they entertained it, is ascribing too much policy to them and to the age. They had infested its coasts at the beginning as roving freebooters; then, like the Angles and Saxons before them, had seized upon portions of the land; and kept what they had won, by main force at first, afterwards by compact, as a people reduced to submission, but too numerous and perhaps too powerful to be expelled. These Anglo-Danes, thus denizened, were now also natives, differing in nothing from the Anglo-Saxons, or English as they were then called, except in some difference of dialect, which was rapidly lessening, and perhaps in retaining more predilection for some of their heathenish customs. The Danes, as a nation, had never yet engaged in a national war against the English *: their own country was in too unsettled a state; they were busied with nearer concerns; and regarded England only as a land which drew off the Vikingr of other countries from their coast, and afforded useful occupation for their own Lacklands, who would have otherwise been restless and dangerous at home. A great change in these relations was now about to be effected.

A Danish force, in the year 991, plundered Ipswich, and advanced to Malden. Brithnoth, then ealderman of Essex, who is described as of commanding stature, elo-

* Holberg, I. 99. note (u).

quent, strong, and always alert in time of danger, advanced to meet them upon the first intelligence, and defeated them with great slaughter. The few who escaped to their ships carried the news of their loss to their own country, and excited so strong a feeling among their countrymen, that a second and stronger expedition was equipped, with which they sailed for Blackwater bay; and having landed near the scene of their former defeat, sent a proud message to Brithnoth, saying they were come to avenge it. Yet it seems that they were more desirous of booty than of vengeance: for it is said, that when the ealderman, collecting as many of his people as could hastily be gathered together, marched against them with all speed, lest the invaders should, owing to his delay, be enabled to occupy a single foot's breadth of the country, they changed their tone, seeing his host in battle array, and demanded gold from him by a herald, asking why they should wage war and slay each other, when he might buy off the danger by delivering up his treasures? Brithnoth bravely answered, that "his treasures were not so easily to be obtained, but that point and edge must determine between them in the grim game of war." But he attempted, with inferior numbers, to defend the passage of the estuary against them; and fell, with most of his followers, in the attempt. The conquerors mangled his body, and carried his head to Denmark, there, probably, to make a drinking cup of his skull; and when the abbot of Ely removed the mutilated remains for interment to his church, to which Brithnoth had been a distinguished benefactor, a waxen head was substituted.*

After this victory, the Danes so miserably harried the defenceless land, .. defenceless because of the imbecility of the rulers and the corruption of the people, .. that king

* Conybeare's Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, lxxxviii—xcvi. The contemporary poem on Brithnoth's death, a translation of which may be found in Mr. Conybeare's most valuable volume, is one of the most precious remains of Anglo-Saxon poetry. The Ely Chronicle, an extract from which is there given in illustration of that poem, shows how it has happened that Brithnoth's death is twice stated in the Saxon Chronicle (pp. 167. 169.) in the same scenes and in different years.

Ethelred the Unready was advised by his council to buy off the invaders. The men of Kent had tried that disgraceful experiment more than a century before, in Ethelbert's reign*, when the negotiation had failed only because the Danes preferred taking all they could find, to receiving what the Kentish men were willing to give. Archbishop Siric is said to have been the person who now proposed this miserable expedient; which no one would have been base enough to propose, if he had not known that the king and the witenagemot would be pusillanimous enough to entertain, and the nation so poor in spirit, so lost in character, as to approve it.† Ten thousand pounds was the sum which was voted on this occasion to the enemy, "for the great terror which they brought upon the sea coast;" and this payment is noticed by early writers as the beginning of direct taxation in this country.‡ The Danes took the money with the intention of coming for more as soon as they might think proper; and, in justice to those by whom the measure was advised, it should be remembered that they considered themselves not as having purchased peace, but a respite from war, and that they employed that respite in planning vigorous measures, and preparing for them. They collected all the serviceable ships that could be gathered together at London, and raising a land force at the same time, intrusted the command of it to an earl, two bishops, and Ælfric the alderman. Nothing has been more clearly proved by experience in war, than that in the multitude of commanders there is danger: in this instance, the evil arose not from jarring opinions, but from treachery. The intention was to surprise the enemy, who were again upon the coast, and to surround them in some port, by land and water; and this was likely to have succeeded, if Ælfric had not apprised the Danes of their danger, and then deserted to them the night before the attack was to have been made. They escaped, therefore, with the loss of one ship's

A.D. 992.

* See p. 30.

† Sax. Chron. 167. William of Malmesbury, 193. Turner, ii. 463.

‡ Turner, ii. 464. Pontanus, 130.

crew. The ships from London and East Anglia met their fleet, and a fierce action ensued, in which Ælfric's vessel was taken, but he himself escaped; and the king, with a cruelty which must be imputed in full as great a degree to his own cowardly nature as to the barbarity of the age, took vengeance upon him by putting out the eyes of his son.* After this, Ælfric feigned repentance, and was pardoned; and it is not surprising that he then avenged himself by a second treason.

Treason, indeed, had now become common, as it ever will in times of anarchy or misrule, and more especially where national differences are still preserved in full force among the people. Bebbanburh (now Bamborough) was plundered and destroyed by the Vikingr: their fleet then entered the Humber, and ravaged the land on both sides; the people gathered together to defend themselves; but their three commanders were of Danish blood †, and, at the moment of joining battle, they set the example of flight. At no former time had England been so feebly defended nor so formidably attacked; for the king of Denmark, Svend-Otto, of the forked beard, the Sweyne of English history, who from the commencement of his reign had encouraged the piratical expeditions against this island, came now in person to take part in them. In the course of his adventurous life he had been driven from his kingdom by Eric of Sweden, and fled hither as to a place of refuge; but Edgar had refused to harbour him, suspecting, it is said, that his flight was simulated, and that his real purpose was to spy the weakness of the land.* The suspicion was false, though the faithless and ambitious character of Sweyne might well give rise to it; he then repaired to Scotland, where he was hospitably entertained, till, upon Eric's death, he was enabled to return to and to recover his kingdom. He had abjured Christianity in his youth, that by the help of the heathen party he might make war upon his father and dethrone him:

A.D. 993.

* Sax. Chron. 168. William of Malmesbury, 194.
† Sax. Chron. 169. Turner, ii. 466.

during his abode in Scotland he became again a Christian in profession, perceiving that heathenism had become the weaker side; but he had not forgotten his repulse at Edgar's court, and the desire of revenging himself upon the people of England upon that score, is said to have been the motive which induced him first to encourage the Vikingr in their expeditions, and now to join with them.*

He was impelled, also, by a mixed motive of honour and of barbarous piety. His father, Harald Blaatand, had fallen in the war which Sweyne, with the aid of a heathen party, waged against him; nevertheless, this son performed obsequies to the parent whom he had dethroned and slain, and the ceremonies are strikingly characteristic of Scandinavian manners and feelings. He invited to the feast, .. for such it was, .. the Jarl Sigvalld, and Bui the Thickset, and their brothers, of the newly founded republic of Jomsburg, that they might make potations in honour of their father at the same time. They came with the bravest of their people, in forty ships, from Vindland, and twenty from Scania. Great multitudes assembled: on the first day of the solemnities, Sweyne, before he ascended the throne, drank a capacious cup of strong drink filled to the brim, to the sacred memory of the late king his father; and then he made a vow, that before three years should have elapsed he would invade England, and either slay king Ethelred, or dispossess him of the throne, and drive him into exile. The guests who had been invited pledged him in that same cup. A second then went round, in memory of our Lord and Saviour, .. so awfully were things sacred and profane blended! .. and a third to the archangel St. Michael. Jarl Sigvalld, next in order, drank to his father's memory; and made, in like manner, a vow that within three years he would invade Norway, and either slay Jarl Haco, or expel him from the land. Thorkell the Tall vowed that he would accompany his brother Sigvalld, and never forsake him, in this adven-

* Pontanus, 138—140. Holberg, i. 97.

ture. Bui the Thickset swore to the same effect; and Vagn Akason vowed that he would go with them, and not return till he had slain Thorkell Leira, and taken his daughter Ingibiorga for a concubine, without asking the consent of her kin. The Vikingr of Jomsburg confessed, on the following morning, when they were sober, that they had vowed greater things than were expedient; but they resolved that for that reason it was necessary to undertake the performance without delay. The fulfilment of Sweyne's vow was delayed much longer, but the time was now at length come for carrying it into effect.*

The sea king, with whom he now united his forces, was a Norwegian, Anlaf or Olaf by name. They sailed up the Thames with ninety-four ships, and appeared before London on the festival of the Virgin Mary's nativity; they made a fierce attack upon the city, and endeavoured to set it on fire; "but they suffered," says the Chronicle†, "more harm and ill than they ever thought any townspeople could have done them; for the holy Mother of God, in her mild-heartedness, on that day considered those townspeople, and they rid themselves of their enemies." But the protection of the tutelary Queen of Angels was vouchsafed only on her own day, and extended only to that place! No other people imitated the brave example of the Londoners. The fleet turned back, indeed, from London; but it was only to "wreak the greatest ill that any host could do," in burning, and plundering, and slaughtering, not only on the Kent and Essex shores, but in Sussex and in Hampshire; and then they took horse, scoured the country far and wide, and committed "unspeakable damage," till the king, with the advice of his base counsellors, sent to offer them tribute and provision for the winter, and to ask with what sum they would be satisfied. They consented to accept sixteen thousand pounds in money; and going to Southampton, took up their winter quarters there, and were fed by the people of Wessex. As their force is computed not to

A.D. 994.

* Snorre, Antiq. Celto-Scand. 76—78.
† Sax. Chron. 170.

have exceeded 10,000 men, it has been suspected that there was more of treachery than of cowardice in the king's council, and that some, who were of Danish blood, had already formed a design of transferring the throne to a Danish dynasty. The fact, that the whole burden of supporting these invaders was thrown upon a part of the country where the people were purely English, instead of requiring that they should quarter themselves among the Anglo-Danes, may seem to corroborate this suspicion.*

Disgraceful as this transaction was, it was the means of converting an active enemy into a friend. Olaf had, probably, manifested a wish to be instructed in the Christian religion; for bishop Ælfeah and the ealderman Ethelwerd, were sent to accompany him from Southampton to Andover, where Ethelred then held his court, leaving hostages in the fleet for his safe return. He was then baptized, the king being his sponsor, thus adopting him as his son, according to the usage of that age; and he promised that he never again would come to England but as a friend, which promise, the Chronicle observes, he kept †, . . an observation that shows how little reliance was placed on the word of a Northman. But the money which had been paid to king Sweyne purchased only a respite of two years. The Danes then entered the Bristol channel, plundering the coast on both sides; landed once more at Watchet, and wreaked their old hatred there with fire and sword; then, turning back, and rounding the Land's End, they coasted the south of Cornwall to the mouth of the Tamar, ascended that river spoiled Lydford, burnt the minster at Tavistock, and returned with a rich booty to their ships. In the ensuing year they entered Poole harbour, and stationing their fleet at the mouth of the Frome, ravaged Dorsetshire. Forces were often collected to oppose them,

A.D. 997.

998.

* Sax Chron. 170, 171. Turner, ii. 467.

† Sax. Chron. 171. Acta Sanctorum, Jul. vii. 93. Camden, therefore, is wrong in stating that "this league of friendship was soon broke, for so great a respect and honour could not restrain that barbarous foreigner from his usual rapines," (p. 117.)

but whenever they were about to join battle, some irresolution appeared, whether arising from the apprehension of treachery in their leaders, distrust of their courage or conduct, or that fear which a succession of defeats may bring even upon brave men; and the invaders were always victorious. Another time they made the Isle of Wight their quarters, and purveyed for themselves in Hampshire and Sussex. The seas, which since England became a great maritime power, have secured it against all foreign enemies, served, in those unhappy ages, only to expose it on all sides to predatory invasion; and the invaders having now learnt to despise a divided people, a feeble government, and a pusillanimous king, sailed up the rivers at their will, and penetrated into the country whithersoever they would.*

A.D. 999.

Next year they came again into the Thames, entered the Medway, and defeated the men of Kent near Rochester, because the English had not the support which they ought to have had. Then, taking horse, they overran that county. The king and his council determined to act against them now by sea and land; ships were collected and manned, but the chiefs were neither so ready nor so faithful as the men: from day to day some reason for delay was found in the irresolution, the discordant opinions, or the treachery of Ethelred's wretched counsellors; and when they acted, the enemy always received such timely intelligence, that they were never to be found where they were sought. Thus, says the Saxon chronicler, these sea-armaments and land-armaments served for nothing but to harass the people and waste their means, and strengthen their enemies. The treason by which all the efforts of the people in their own defence were frustrated, is explained by the great intermixture which by this time had taken place both with "the Danes and Britons, who were like enemies to the English†;" there being few, it is said, either of the nobles or commons who were not, in some degree, connected with them. This, however, though highly dan-

* Sax. Chron. 172. Turner, ii. 468, 469. † Holinshed, i. 708.

gerous, could never have produced such general evil, unless the misrule and consequent anarchy had been so great that men felt themselves discharged from all responsibility to such a government, and regarded only their own interest or their own safety. A year's interval recurred; the Vikingr, as if to leave England fallow for that season, having directed their course against Normandy, and Sweyne being engaged in war with the king of Norway. Ethelred employed this interim, not in preparing against the certain renewal of their hostilities, but in wasting Cumberland with an army, and the Isle of Man with a fleet.* The enemy returned in the ensuing year, landed in Hampshire, and advanced to Æthelinga-dene, now Alton, ravaging all before them. There they were encountered by such a local force as could hastily be brought together. On the part of its leaders there could have been no treachery; for Ethelward and Leofwin, who were two of the king's high gerefas, fell, and three other persons of such distinction that their names were recorded. But the people must either have been wanting in numbers or in heart; for, after losing little more than fourscore men, they left the Danes in possession of the field, though the conquerors, it is affirmed, had suffered much greater loss. The conquerors proceeded westward without opposition, and on the Devonshire coast they were joined by another fleet of freebooters, collected by Pallig† (probably some Vikingr), on whom Ethelred had bestowed domains and gold and silver, for the sake of securing his services, but who, with piratical contempt of faith, broke all the promises and oaths which he had made.‡

A.D. 1000.

1001.

* Mænige, Sax. Chron. 172. Mr. Ingram interprets this Anglesea, but I believe it, with Mr. Turner, to have been the other Mona, as the much more likely place. Cressy also so interprets it; "for that island was esteemed by the Danes a secure nest, whither on all occasions they might safely retire and lay up their spoils." — *Church History of England*, p. 904. And here Cressy, as usual, follows F. Alford. Annales Eccl. Anglicanæ, tom. iii. p. 426.

† Perhaps this is the person whom William of Malmesbury calls Palling, whose wife Gunhilda, the sister of Sweyne, came with him to England, and by embracing Christianity made herself a pledge of the Danish peace; and with her husband and his son was murdered in the massacre.

‡ Sax. Chron. 173, 174.

They now burnt Teignton, and more goodly towns than the chronicler could name; till the inhabitants, finding they were not spared, because they offered no resistance, made peace with them: which means, that they compounded for their own safety, without any reference to their inefficient government. Another force had now been employed under two of the king's gerefas, but this was defeated and put to flight at Pinhoe. The victorious Danes turned eastward then, and, quartering themselves in the Isle of Wight, compelled the people of the adjacent country, by fire and sword, to make terms with them. When the counties were thus treating for themselves, the king and his council might easily make themselves believe that it would be not less a prudent than a popular measure once more to purchase peace for the nation. The ealderman Leofsige was the negotiator on this occasion; and the Danes consented, on condition of receiving 24,000*l.*, and being moreover supplied with provisions, to desist from their ravages. That the Danes would soon have repeated their visits, their devastations and their exactions is what the experience of such transactions renders certain; but they were prevented now by an act of greater perfidy and more atrocious wickedness than they themselves, wicked and perfidious as they were, had ever committed or imagined; for, upon a pretext that they intended to kill him and his council, and make themselves masters of the kingdom, Ethelred issued secret orders for the well known and never to be forgotten massacre of all the Danes in England.*

A.D. 200.

The Saxon chronicler, in whose time this massacre occurred †, seems to accredit the plea that it was a preventive measure; and if any inference might here be drawn from the silence of one who so briefly recorded passing events, it would appear that he felt no shame for the baseness, no indignation at the cowardly inhumanity, no horror for the guilt of such an expedient.

* Sax. Chron. 174—176.

† So Mr Ingram infers from the text, in which, only seven years later, the present tense is used.

Even if that plea were not, as must be suspected, a mere pretext, . . even if the Danish chiefs had formed the intention which was imputed to them, it would afford no excuse for such means of prevention. It may be hoped, and indeed believed, that the accursed circumstances which Danish historians have repeated, are only such exaggerations as the event was likely to occasion; but it is certain that women and children were not spared, the intent being to extirpate the Danes in England. More than any other event in English history this must be deemed a national sin, because it was so widely carried into execution that the greater part of the nation were not only consenting to it, but actually engaged in it. It was a national sin of the blackest character, and, as such, it was punished by national judgments, the heaviest of their kind for the then existing generations; yet so directed by that almighty and all-merciful Providence, which, in its omniscience, ordereth all things for the best, as to produce great and abiding good for future times. In little more than the course of threescore years the people who had contracted this guilt were twice brought under the dominion of a foreign king; their princes were driven into exile; their nobles slain in the field, or put to death as subjects who had rebelled against their liege lord; their churches were filled with foreign prelates and monks; their land was divided among the conquerors; their laws were enacted and administered in a foreign tongue; and their very language was disused, not in their laws alone, but in their religious ceremonies, till, long after, it had, in process of time, melted into a composite speech with that of their Norman masters.

The folly of this atrocious measure was as enormous as its wickedness. For, if it had been carried into effect with the most remorseless resolution, so large a part of the population was at that time Danish, that, even in England, the Danes must have been weakened in a much less degree than they were exasperated; and their countrymen were a formidable nation, masters of

the sea, and with an able and active sovereign at their head. Wherever the people ventured to obey the execrable orders of their government, they seem not to have shrunk from the crimes which were required at their hands; but as no struggle is recorded, it must be inferred that no attack was made in any part of the country where resistance was to be expected. Sweyne was soon upon the coast, thirsting now more for vengeance than ever before for booty. His sister, Gunhilda, had been put to death, with her husband and son, in the presence and by command of Edric Streone, who has left the most infamous name in Anglo-Saxon history. Brotherly feeling may have had little influence upon one who had shown no sense of filial duty; but no additional excitement was needed, or could indeed be felt, incensed as he and his people justly were to the highest degree. The first year he ravaged Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Wiltshire without resistance; the next he came with his ships to Norwich, and burnt the town. Ulfkytel, who commanded in East Anglia, agreed with the other chiefs, that seeing the enemy had come upon them unawares, before he had had time to gather his forces, it was better to purchase peace with them before they did too much harm in the land. The Danes would now have deserved more reproach for seriously listening to such a proposal, than for entertaining it only with the view of taking vengeance the more securely. While they amused him, as they thought, with negotiating upon the terms, they made a secret march upon Thetford; but he, too, was on the alert, gathered his forces as secretly as he could, and sent orders to destroy their ships. That attempt failed; for they had not left them unprotected. Having plundered and burnt Thetford (then a populous and famous place, but which has never recovered its former prosperity), after a night employed in havoc, the Danes set out in the morning to return to their fleet. Ulfkytel intercepted them; and so brave a battle ensued, that, if his whole force had been collected, the enemy would never have effected their retreat. They con-

A.D. 1003.

1004.

fessed that they never had met with "worse hand-play" in England than what Ulfkytel then brought them. But their numbers gave them the victory, and many of his veteran East Anglians fell.*

A.D. 1005. 1006. The next season brought with it a severe famine, which seems for that year to have rid the country of the Danes. On the following they returned to prosecute their just vengeance, landed at Sandwich, and spoiled, burned, and slaughtered wherever they went. The whole population of Wessex and Mercia were ordered out to oppose them, and even lay under arms during the harvest: but it is said that this availed as little as it had often done before; that the enemy went whither they would; and that the people suffered more from being kept in the field than they would have done in battle. After Martinmas, the Danes returned to their quarters in the Isle of Wight, providing themselves by plunder: in winter they went into Berkshire, as to their ready farm, says the chronicler; lighting, according to custom, their camp beacons as they went; that is to say, marking their way by flames. A force was brought against them at Kennet, and defeated there; and they turned back to their quarters with their booty. "Then might the people of Winchester see them passing their gates, and fetching their food and plunder over an extent of fifty miles from the sea coast." Ethelred, who seems to have taken shelter in the centre of the kingdom, as if the safest place were that which was farthest from the sea, once more took counsel with advisers who were as base as himself, and once more they concluded that their only resource was once more to offer tribute. The Danes accepted 36,000*l.*, and the English were again compelled to feed them." †

That money purchased two years' respite. During the first the government could exact nothing more from

* Sax. Chron. 176—178.

† Sax. Chron. 181. Turner, ii. 477. The printed Chronicle says 30,000*l.* Manuscripts and most ancient authorities make it 36,000*l.* The smaller sum, according to Mr. Palgrave (Hist. of England, i. 291.) was the worth of 720,000 acres of land.

its exhausted subjects: in the second, it called upon them to build and present a ship from every 310 hides of land, and from every eight hides to furnish a helmet and breast-plate. This is the remotest precedent that has been discovered for the tax of ship-money: according to the best calculation, it would have produced nearly 800 ships, and have armed more than 30,000 men. In the third year they were ready; and "the book tells us that never before were so many ships gathered together in England in any king's days." All were brought round to Sandwich, "that they might lie there, and defend the land against any out-force." If such were indeed the arrangement, and this whole formidable fleet was collected at one point, instead of being stationed in different parts for the defence of a coast which was every where attacked, the writers of that age might well complain of treason in the king's councils. But, before Sweyne could profit by this disposition, the naval preparations of the English had ended in bringing upon themselves more confusion, loss, consternation, and disgrace. There was a feud at this time between two chiefs, Brihtric, brother of the notorious traitor Edric, and Child Wulfnoth, father of the not less notorious earl Godwin. The former preferred an accusation against the latter; and Wulfnoth, though he is said to have been unjustly accused, justified the accusation by his conduct; for he deserted with twenty ships, commenced pirate, plundered the south coast, and, though it was his own country, wrought every kind of mischief there. Brihtric was despatched against him with eighty sail, thinking to take him alive or dead. The fleet was driven ashore by a tremendous storm; and Wulfnoth soon came and burnt it, where it lay stranded. When this news came to the king, he and his caldermen and nobles are said to have regarded all as lost, and to have forsaken the remainder of the ships, which were then brought back to London, and all thought of naval defence was abandoned.* Thus lightly, says the chro-

A.D. 1009.

* Sax. Chron. 182. It may fairly be inferred from hence, that the assess-

nicler, did they let the labour of all the people go to waste!

Presently, as if they had waited only for this dispersion, the Danes came to Sandwich. Thurkill was the commander of this army, and it was known by his name. They would have stormed Canterbury, if the people of East Kent had not purchased a respite for 3000*l.*; then they made for the Isle of Wight, and from their old head-quarters ravaged Hampshire, Berkshire, and Sussex. The whole country was called upon to arm and act against them on all sides; yet nowhere did they meet with any effectual resistance. Once, when the king might, with a good force, have intercepted them when laden with booty, the traitor Edric frustrated his purpose. At the fall of the leaf they stationed themselves for the winter upon the Thames, and they often attacked London; but the annalist, who perhaps had his dwelling there, exclaims, "Glory be to God, that it yet standeth firm, and they always meet with evil fare there!" They crossed the Chiltern hills during the winter, burnt Oxford, and plundered on both sides of the river downward from thence to Staines. Then, avoiding the force which the Londoners had gathered against them, they continued their destructive movement till the spring, when they returned into Kent, and there repaired their ships. They sailed next for the eastern coast, entered the Orwell, and, landing at Ipswich, went in search of Ulfkytel, to revenge themselves for the victory over him, which had cost them so dear. In this battle they had their revenge; for the East Anglians soon fled; and though the men of Cambridge stood firm, many good thanes and a multitude of the people fell, and the invaders remained masters of the field and of the country. They soon mounted themselves, so as to have East Anglia at their will; entered the fens, slaying men and cattle, and burnt

A.D. 1010.

ment had not produced the calculated number of ships; but that the 100 sail which were lost by desertion and by this destruction were a very considerable part of the armament.

Thetford and Cambridge. One part went southward, then toward the Thames; the others to their fleet. They are spoken of next as entering Oxfordshire, then Buckinghamshire, and so along the Ouse to Bedford and Temisford, where, at the confluence of the Irwell and the Ouse, the vestiges of a camp* and the remains of a castle long continued to mark their winter-quarters. Meantime, whether imbecility, or cowardice, or treachery prevailed in Ethelred's council, the effect was the same: his levies were either disbanded at the time when their services were most needed, or they were in the west when the enemy was in the east, and when the enemy was in the south they were in the north. All the king's counsellors were summoned to advise how the country might be defended; but no plan was persisted in longer than for a few months, and at length, the annalist says, there was not a chief who would collect a force; each fled as he could, and no shire would stand by another. †

A.D. 1011.

Under such circumstances, Ethelred and his Witan might easily persuade themselves that their only resource was to purchase another interval of rest, and that composition might be made upon better terms by the government, than by each part of the kingdom compounding for itself. At this time sixteen counties had been over-run.‡ "All these misfortunes," says the chronicler, "fell upon us through ill counsel;" that they would neither offer tribute in time, nor fight in time; but when most mischief had been done, then they made terms with the enemy. And notwithstanding these terms, and the promised peace and amity for which the tribute was paid, the Danes went every where in troops, plundering, and spoiling, and slaughtering our miserable people." Hitherto, the Danes had generally kept such treaties faithfully§; and this was said to be their

* Camden, 288. † Sax. Chron. 183—186.

‡ "Deus bone!" says Father Alfred, "quot uno anno loca vastaverunt. Ego certè si singula percurro manum æquè ac pedem fatigabo."

§ "Hoc solum inerat boni promissam fidem nolle mentiri; et hoc interdum." — *Osbern. Vita S. Elphegi. Acta SS. April.* t. ii. p. 636.

only virtue; occasional infractions being rather imputed to independent freebooters than to the nation. But they did not now give the miserable English the measure of peace which had been bargained and paid for: and with what decency could a government that had plotted the massacre of the Danes, and a people who had perpetrated it, complain of bad faith? At this time they are said to have been instigated by the traitor Edric. His brother (probably that Brihtric under whose command the eighty ships were lost) had accused the nobles of Kent before the king, and entered forcibly upon their possessions. They, in return, surrounded him in one of his houses, and set fire to the house; and he either perished in the flames, or was killed as he attempted to escape from them. The manners of the nation, indeed, were such as to deserve the evils which were brought upon them. In revenge for his brother, Edric, who had always been in secret communication with the Danes, is now charged with proposing to them that they should drive Ethelred from the throne, take the whole north of England for their own, and leave him, as their friend and ally, in possession of the rest. This agreement having been made, he urged them, for his own purposes of vengeance, to begin with Canterbury.* The citizens made a brave defence, being animated by the presence and the exhortations of their Archbishop, Ælfeah, or Elphege. They held out twenty days, till their provisions were consumed; and then the prelate, who was eminent for the holiness of his life, sent to the Danish chief, not to propose terms of surrender, but to entreat that he would spare the innocent †, and take heed how he abused that power with which, for the sins of his people, God had armed the Danes. There seems reason to think that Thurkill was disposed to grant the mercy that was thus supplicated; but he had little authority in such things over his men, and still less over the En-

* Osbern, ut supra, 637.

† "Ut ab incepto desistat," Osbern says, and Capgrave and Alford follow him. But Cressy drops this, as I have done, believing that the archbishop would not have made so absurd a request.

glish*, who formed part of his army, and who were either the retainers of Edric, eager to avenge his quarrel, or Anglo-Danes in whom the remembrance of the massacre was burning. They began to storm the city; and, throwing firebrands from the mounds and towers which they had constructed, set some of the dwellings on fire. A strong south wind spread the conflagration; and at this crisis, when the citizens were confounded, not knowing whether to abandon the walls to the assailants, or their houses to the flames, Elfmar, the archdeacon, whose life had been spared for some former crime by Elphege, is charged with having treacherously admitted the enemy†: . . if he did so, it was a sin of supererogation; for the place at that moment was at their mercy. Unutterable cruelties were then committed upon the inhabitants; and when rapine and cruelty were satiated, it is affirmed that military execution followed, and that the survivors were decimated, . . not in the manner which that word usually implies, but nine of every ten being put to death, and only the tenth spared. Four of the clergy and eight hundred of the people are said to have been all that were left alive.

Canterbury having been thus laid waste, they carried Elphege on board their fleet, expecting to exact a large ransom for him; and then sailed for Greenwich. The old system of negotiation had been once more renewed, and the sum of 48,000*l.* agreed upon as the tribute. Edric, and all the elders of the Witan, clergy or laymen, came to London to see to the collection and the payment. Meantime Elphege attempted to escape by night. One monkish biographer, who, like all such biographers, is never at a loss for a miracle, says, that the Devil appeared to him in his prison, but in the form of an Angel of light; and, saying that he was sent to deliver him, as St. Peter and St. Paul had been delivered, led him into the midst of the

A.D. 1012.

* "Nam illi ad impietatem procliviores extiterant." — *Osbern.* 638.

† The Saxon Chronicle accuses him. Osbern's silence does not invalidate the charge, because he would be as ready to suppress any fact to the discredit of his brethren, as to invent or propagate miracles in their honour.

marshes, then vanished, and left him there in the darkness; that the Archbishop, perceiving then how he had been deceived, prayed to our Lord, when an Angel was sent to guide him back to prison, and comfort him by the promise that on the morrow he should be rewarded with a crown of glory for all his sufferings; that, as he was about to re-enter his prison*, the guards saw, caught him, and beat him cruelly before they thrust him in; and that during the night a celestial splendour illumined the place, and he was refreshed with heavenly odours, and many saints appeared to him singing hymns of thanksgiving and of joy, among whom he recognised St. Dunstan, who told him they were come to let him see the blessed society which he should partake through all eternity, if he would persevere only one day more in

* These fictions serve to confirm the account given by Ditmarus Mersepurgius, who lived about that time, and whose informant, Sewald, had probably been an eye-witness of the archbishop's death. "Elphege," he says, "having been tormented in various ways to extort a ransom, promised at length a certain sum by a certain day; yielding, the writer says, to human frailty, and thinking that if there should be none who would raise the money for his deliverance, he should at least have time in the interval to prepare for death. The day came; and when he was called upon to fulfil his engagement, he presented himself, like a lamb for the slaughter, saying, 'As to my seeming a liar to you, it was not my own will, but extremity that made me so. The body, which I have loved but too well, I surrender to you, as guilty: it is in your power to do with it what you please; but my sinful soul, over which you have no power, I humbly commend to the mercy of its Creator.'" Sewald adds, that Thurkill endeavoured in vain to save him, and offered his comrades all his own spoil, and every thing, except his ship, which he possessed, if they would spare the archbishop's life. Camden, 188.

This, which father Alford (t. iii. p. 461.) takes great pains to disprove, is no doubt the truth. Elphege hoped that his ransom would make a part of the treaty, or that it would be raised by his clergy; and waiting till the last day in that hope, attempted then to make his escape, lost his way in the marshes, and was brought back to prison. The miracles were invented less for the purpose of excusing his flight, than of excusing the monks for not raising his ransom; and it was the more necessary to devise some apology for them, inasmuch as the monkish writers censured the king for suffering him to lie in prison, without affording him any help or assistance. They asserted, therefore, that the Danes demanded sixty talents of silver, each of fifty pounds weight, for his own ransom, and required him to pledge himself that the king should pay two hundred such talents as the price of peace. Elphege, they say, replied, that this was neither possible, nor reasonable if it had been possible: not possible, because the land had been ravaged and laid waste; not reasonable that he should advise the king to any thing, "contra patriæ decus," against the honour of his country; nor that he should consent to have the church despoiled of its possessions for his own sake, "propterea quod Christiani hominis non sit Christianorum carnes paganis dentibus conterendas dare." In this, they say, he proposed to himself to follow the example of St. Lawrence; and, as he suffered death in consequence, he was for this declared to be a martyr, and canonised accordingly. (Osbern, 638.) "Pro justissimâ causâ mortuus Elphegus sanctus et martyr appellatus."—*Alford*, iii. 461.

suffering patiently whatever God might for His glory permit his persecutors to inflict upon him. On the morrow he was brought before the Danish chiefs when they were assembled at a drunken feast, a cargo of wine having just been brought them from the south.* They demanded the sum which they had fixed for his ransom; and as he had it not to produce, and could make no promise that it should be paid, they threw their battle-axes at him, then the heads and bones of the oxen which had been slaughtered for the feast, and then stoned him, till some one whom he had formerly confirmed, cleft his head in compassion with an axe."†

There are falsehoods which so truly characterise the manners and the spirit of different ages, that they ought not to be rejected from the history in which they occur. It is related, that when the Danish chiefs, to whose drunken fury Elphege had fallen a victim, ordered his body to be cast into the river, the great multitude of their soldiers, whom he had converted to the faith, refused to permit this; and, though they had made no attempt to save him, took arms to prevent such an indignity from being offered to his remains. A council, however, was held by common consent, in which it was agreed that trial should be made whether or not Elphege had been a holy man; which, if he were proved to be, his body was to be at the disposal of those who believed in him, and they might inter it with what honour they would. The proof was to be made by smearing an oar with his blood, and planting it in the ground that night: if on the morrow it remained barked and sapless, as they now beheld it, his converts were to acknowledge themselves convinced of error; but if, on the contrary, it should put forth leaves, the pagan chiefs should then confess their fault. At daylight, accordingly, the oar

* Sax. Chron. 183.

† Osbern, 638—640. Alford, iii. 460. Cressy, book xxxiii. c. 27. Sax. Chron. 188, 189. "Eo sceleratiùs factum," says the jesuit F. Alford, "quia Swanus Danorum rex et primi inter eos Christiani fuerunt; quos oportuit non Calvinistarum more, sanctos viros et infulà dignissimos, sed Christianorum more tractare." Probably he was thinking of Laud's iniquitous fate when he wrote this sentence.

was found to have assumed the appearance of a flourishing young ash. The body was then borne to the tomb upon the shoulders of its humiliated and penitent murderers, and innumerable miracles were immediately performed by it: there was a present cure for the lame, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the diseased; and all who refused still to be converted were cut off by some speedy and dreadful death.* With such inventions, the monks adorned, as they thought, the disgraceful fact, that the primate of England, having been made prisoner in his own city, had been carried by his captors to Greenwich, detained there in rigorous durance for seven months, while the great council of the realm was sitting at London, and put to death, because there was none to ransom him; and this not forty years after Edgar had commanded the four seas!

Whatever may have been the reasons which withheld the Witan, or the clergy, from ransoming Elphege when his life might have been saved, his body, after he had thus suffered, was thought to be worth any price, and large offers were immediately made for it. Having obtained it †, the Londoners conveyed it, with triumphant joy, to St. Paul's, and there deposited it as a treasure. The whole of the tribute, or Danegelt, by which name the humiliating impost was called, seems at this time to have been paid. The Danes swore to keep the peace which had been purchased, and then their force dispersed as widely as it had before been collected. Thurkill, with five and forty ships, entered into Ethelred's service ‡, and engaged to defend the land, on condition that they should be fed and clothed. But the kingdom was in a miserable state of exhaustion; and when the wretched king assembled his Witan once more,

* Osbern, 640.

† "Sive gratiâ seu pretio," says Osbern; for to have admitted that the Danes sold it, after such proof of his sanctity, would have thrown some discredit upon the miraculous part of his story.

‡ Cressy (p. 920.) supposes this to have been a defensive treaty with the Danes; whereas it appears to have been with an adventurer who made war on his own account, and was ready at any time to engage on the side which offered him most advantage. The view which Cressy takes is supported by Pontanus (p. 143.). Mr. Palgrave understands it as I have done.

at a place called Haba, they found themselves so helpless, so hopeless, so destitute of all human resources, that almost the only business which they performed was to order that an extraordinary fast should be kept for the three days before St. Michael's day, on bread, raw herbs, and water, on which days the poor were to be provided with a meal by the more fortunate classes, but without meat; that in every parish on these days processions should be made barefoot; that every one should confess and perform penance, every priest say thirty masses, and every inferior clerk and monk thirty psalms for the king and the kingdom, and that in every church the mass *contra paganos* should be sung daily. Every servant was to be exempt from work on these days, that he might the better perform the religious duties which were required; but on his own account he was at liberty to employ himself as he chose. Any one of the servile class who should break this fast was to be punished in person, as he could not in purse*; a poor freeman was to be mulcted thirty pence for the same transgression; a king's thane 120 shillings; and these fines were to be divided among the poor. Robbery, selling men into foreign slavery, and the abuse of justice for hatred, for favour, or for the lucre of gain, were denounced as crying sins; and the people were exhorted to serve God and obey the king, as their ancestors had done, that so they might better defend the kingdom.† "All these humiliations," says a church historian ‡, "being extorted by fear, did not produce that effect which otherwise they would have done." That they could not but fail might have been expected, because they were performed in fear, as well as extorted by it. Against the natural visitations which God, in the course of his providence, appoints, there is no other resource, no other refuge, than to Himself, in earnest and continued sup-

* "Corio suo componat."

† Alford, iii. 464., where the laws are given from Spelman. Cressy, 920.

‡ Cressy. "Et sanè strictissima jejuniorum qualitas quæ in pane et aquâ præcipitur, processis, nudis pedibus, orationum et eleemosynarum frequentia satis arguunt Anglorum res deploratas fuisse et pejora timeri." —*Alford*, iii. 465.

plication; but when a people call upon Heaven to aid them against their enemies, they must put up their prayers in hope, and help themselves, if they would be holpen.

If Sweyne desired any other plea than his own will and pleasure for renewing hostilities, he may have found it in the king of England's engagement with Thurkill, who was a Danish subject. The Danish party was in itself strong, and was at this time increased by that numerous class of persons who are always ready to forsake the losing side. While his own people urged Sweyne to invade England, for the purpose of punishing Thurkill * as a traitor who had revolted from his allegiance, the Anglo-Danes, and those who now made common cause with them, invited him to the easy conquest of a fertile land; where the king, having abandoned himself to women and wine, was hated by his subjects, and despised by other nations; where the chiefs were jealous of each other, and the people prepared for defeat by their weakness, their distrust, and their fears.† Little persuasion was needed by one whose power was commensurate with his ambition. He assembled a great fleet, and set sail, with a display of splendour ‡, as if his object had been rather to take possession of a kingdom than to conquer one, so gaily were his vessels adorned, and their prows crested with lions, eagles, dolphins, and dragons, emblematic alike of their swiftness and their strength. First, he made for Sandwich; but, making little tarriance there, as if the information which he had there obtained induced him to change the scene of his operations, he sailed for the mouth of the Humber, and, entering the Trent, landed at Gainsborough.§ The whole country north of the

A.D. 1013.

* Palgrave, 299.

† William of Malmesbury, 213. He represents this advice as coming from Thurkill; but [illegible] the subsequent conduct of that chief proves that he was [illegible], there is a confusion of time and circumstances in this part of the history.

‡ Palgrave, 299.

§ "So famous," says Camden (472.), "for [illegible] the harbour of the Danish ships."

Humber submitted to him, with its earl Uhtred. This example was followed by the people of Lindsey, next by the Fifburhingam, or Fiveburgings, as the associated Danish inhabitants of Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby were called *, and then by all the military force north of Watling Street, every shire giving him hostages. These hostages and the fleet he left in charge with his son Canute; and having obtained provisions and horses from his new subjects, he mounted his main force, crossed Watling Street, and, in the words of the chronicle, they wrought the greatest evil that any army could do.† Oxford and Winchester submitted with little or no resistance. He carried away hostages from both cities, and then bent his course towards London, proceeding with such eager speed, that many of his people were lost in crossing the Thames, because they would not make a circuit to reach a bridge, nor patiently explore the places where the river might be safely forded. By this rapidity he expected to get possession of London; but Ethelred was there, and, unworthy as he was, the Londoners nobly thought ‡, that, if they deserted their king, who had thus committed himself to their fidelity, they should commit a sin which ought never to be forgiven. Thurkill also, who proved faithful to his engagement, was with him, and the auxiliary fleet was in the river. The invader employed artifice and force alike in vain: the citizens rejected his overtures and repelled his assaults; and, if the same courage and the same loyalty had been found in other parts of the kingdom, England would not have been subdued by the Danes.§

But this brave example was lost upon the nation.

* Gibson, note to Camden, 865. York and Chester afterwards joined the association, and they were then called the Sevenburgings. Alford, speaking of those who submitted to the Danish conqueror at this time, calls them "Populus [illegible] impatiens, ideo ad nova imperia promptus, quia omne imperium fugiebat," iii. 465. But the motive for their submission is to be found in their blood, rather than in their impatience of government.

† "Oppressi cives, trucidati coloni, vastati agri, exustæ domus, luci et pomeria succisa, spoliatæ ecclesiæ, nec parcitum imbelli sexui, sed obvium quodcunque aut jugulatum aut reservatum libidini."—Pontanus, 143.

‡ William of Malmesbury, 214.

§ Sax. Chron. 190, [illegible]. Alford, iii. 465, 466. Pontanus, 143

Sweyne marched into the west after his repulse, and halted with his army at Bath, whither Ethelmar, the ealderman, and all the western thanes, came to make their submission, and give hostages. He then returned northward to his ships, the people, whithersoever he went, now acknowledging him as king. The Londoners, themselves, finding that they were unsupported, persisted no longer in their resistance. He had threatened, if he took the city, to pluck out their eyes, and lop off their hands and feet: they knew that this threat was made with the intention of fulfilling it; and they now submitted in despair, satisfied in having so done their duty, that they were the last to yield. This it is affirmed they would not have done, if the king had not withdrawn from them, either in cowardice or in distrust; for, says the monkish historian, "they were men deserving of all praise, whom Mars himself would not have disdained to encounter, if they had had a worthy leader. Even with only the shadow of one to support them, they braved all dangers of battle, and withstood a siege of several months." But Ethelred, who took refuge first in Thurkill's fleet, with his family, and afterwards in the Isle of Wight, accused his chiefs and his people, and took no shame to himself. He represented to those abbots and bishops who still adhered to him in his adversity, that, through the treachery of those in whom he had confided, he was now, to the disgrace of the English, who had deserted him, an outcast and a fugitive; and they who had thus faithfully followed his fortunes were now in such straits, that many of them wanted clothing, and all found it difficult to procure food. The country was completely subdued, the coast closely watched; and perhaps at this time there was more danger from their countrymen, he said, than from their enemies. Nothing remained but a doubtful hope that the duke of Normandy might take them under his protection. This he would ascertain, by sending over the queen and her children. If the duke, her brother, received them as persons who were so near to him in blood, that kindness

would be a pledge of his own security; otherwise he should not want resolution to die where he was, with honour, rather than to live with ignominy any where! The queen's reception was such as he desired; and having waited some months in the Isle of Wight, without perceiving any favourable change in the state of affairs, Ethelred followed them himself, leaving Sweyne king of England in full possession, but by the yet insecure right of conquest.*

A.D. 1014.

He held it but a few weeks after the dethroned king had retired to Normandy.† The fleet immediately obeyed his son Canute as his successor; but the witan assembled, and advised that Ethelred should be invited back; for no lord, they said, could be dearer to them than their natural one, if he would govern them better than he had done before. Gladly did Ethelred receive such an invitation; and he sent over his son Edmund the Atheling, with the messenger, who had orders to salute all his people, saying, that he would be their good lord, would amend all those things of which they all complained, and would forgive all that had been said or

* Sax. Chron. 191. William of Malmesbury, 214—216.

† His opportune death was ascribed to the vengeance of king St. Edmund, upon whose abbey he had imposed a grievous tribute. There was a monk of that abbey, Egelwin by name, who, according to the legend, was called St. Edmund's privy chamberlain, and not undeservedly; for he used, at certain times, to open the saint's sepulchre, wash him, and comb his hair, taking for his reward such hairs as came off in combing, which he preserved as relics. At such times he used, in his affectionate devotion, to speak to him in a familiar manner, as if to a living person; and, "which was wonderful," the dead saint sometimes answered him. Egelwin very naturally complained to him of the oppressions under which the nation groaned, and more especially of the tax which was levied upon his church, and the insolent terms in which Sweyne had defied the saint himself. Upon this St. Edmund appeared to him in a dream, and bade him in his name go to king Sweyne, and admonish him to desist from oppressing his people, if he would avoid the divine vengeance which was impending over him. As might be supposed, the messenger was disregarded, and thought himself fortunate to escape with life. But whether St. Edmund, in a vision on the following night, struck the Danish king on the head, of which blow he died the following day, or whether he approached him in armour in the midst of his army, and with a spear inflicted upon him an invisible but mortal wound, is diversely reported. All the various relations are given by father Alford (iii. 467, 468.). Cressy contents himself with Capgrave's story (922.). Baron Holberg supposes that some good English patriot acted the part of the saint, and delivered his country from a great tyrant (i. 100.). But the Saxon Chronicle simply records his death: this silence sufficiently shows that he died in course of nature, and that the circumstances (in imitation of the legend of St. Marcial, who has the credit of having killed Julian) were after-inventions, for the honour of St. Edmund and the profit of his monastery.

done against him, provided they submitted to him with sincerity. Then, says the chronicle, was full friendship established, in word, and in deed, and in compact, on either side. "In this remarkable transaction," says Mr. Palgrave*, "we may discern the germ of Magna Charta, and of all the subsequent compacts between the king and people of England." Every Danish king, it was now declared, was to be held for ever as an outlaw in England; a declaration which shows with how deep a hatred the Danes were regarded. Ethelred then returned from the continent, and was received with that joy which always accompanies a restoration. He lost no time in sending agents to all parts where mercenaries could be engaged; and great numbers flocked to him accordingly. Among them came a certain king Olaf (perhaps the same who had been baptized in this country): he brought with him a strong fleet; and, with the aid of these Scandinavian ships, the king of England resolved upon attempting to retake London from the Danes.

The fleet was of little use, unless it could pass the bridge. But this, which was of wood, wide enough for the commodious passage of two carriages, and supported upon trestles, had been strongly fortified with towers, and a parapet breast high; and at its south end it was defended by a military work, placed on what the Icelandic historian calls the great emporium of Southwark. This fortress was of great strength, built of wood and stone, with a deep and wide ditch, and ramparts of earth. A first attack upon the bridge failed; for the Danes had manned it well, and defended it bravely. Grieved at his repulse, Ethelred held a council of war, to deliberate in what manner they might hope to destroy the bridge; and Olaf undertook to make the attempt with some of his ships, if the other leaders would join in the assault. Causing, therefore, some deserted houses to be pulled down, he employed the beams and planks

* Turner, Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons, 303. "With the full acknowledgment of hereditary right, the nation stipulated that the king should not abuse his power. They imposed terms upon Ethelred; they vindicated their national liberty, at the same time that they respected the sanctity of the crown."

in constructing projections from the sides of the ships, under cover of which, when they were laid alongside the bridge, the assault might be made; a contrivance intended to serve the same purpose as those machines which, under the names of "cats" and "sows," were used in sieges. He expected that the roofing would be strong enough to resist the weight of any stones which might be thrown upon it; but in this expectation he had calculated too much upon the solidity of his materials, and too little upon the exertions and activity of the defendants; and when, with the advantage of the flowing tide, the ships had taken their station, stones of such magnitude were let fall upon them, that the cover was beaten in: shields and helmets afforded no protection; the ships themselves were shaken and greatly injured, and many of them sheered off. Olaf, however, persisted in his enterprise. Under cover of such a bulwark, he succeeded in fastening some strong cables or chains to the trestles which supported the bridge; and, when the tide had turned, his rowers, aided by the returning stream, tore away the middle of it, many of the enemy being precipitated into the river. The others fled into the city, or into Southwark; and the Thames was thus opened to the fleet. The south work was then attacked and carried; and the Danes were no longer able to prevent the Londoners from opening their gates, and joyfully receiving their king.*

Ethelred then moved against Canute, who, since his father's death, had remained with his fleet at Gainsborough, and had just now agreed with the people of Lindsey that they should supply him with horses, and make a joint expedition with him for the sake of plunder. But so little did Ethelred deserve the reproach of unreadiness at this time, that he arrived in Lindsey with his army before they were in the field; and Canute,

* I owe my first knowledge of this interesting fact in English and naval history to Mr. Rickman's Statement of Progress under the Population Act of 1830, where the Latin translation of Snorre's narrative is given in a note (16, 17.). The original Icelandic may be found in Johnstone's Antiquitates Celto-Scandicæ, 89, 90. This is the earliest mention of a bridge over the Thames at London.

unable to protect his Anglo-Danish subjects, took to his ships, and sailed out of the Humber, leaving them to his mercy. Little did they find at Ethelred's hands. He "plundered, and burnt, and slew all the men he could take;" while Canute, with equal inhumanity, making for Sandwich, landed the hostages there who had been given to his father, cut off their ears and noses and hands, and then repaired to Denmark; either deeming it necessary to secure his succession in his native country, or because he found that a stronger spirit * had manifested itself against him in England than he was able at that time to contend with. For a little while the English were delivered from their foreign enemies; but money was now to be raised for the payment of their foreign friends †; and when 21,000*l.* were levied for that purpose, they felt more aggrieved by the impost, than grateful for services which had been bravely as well as faithfully performed. The miseries of the people were increased by a great sea-flood, on the eve of St. Michael's day, such as had never been heard of before: many towns were destroyed, and innumerable lives. Early in the ensuing year the witan was held at Oxford, and marked by an act of characteristic treachery on the part of Edric Streone, a man as conspicuous in those miserable times for the skill with which he conducted his political intrigues as for his crimes. Sigforth and Morcar, who were Anglo-Danes, and chiefs of the seven burghs, were inveigled by him to a feast; and when they had been made so drunk as to be incapable

A.D. 1015.

* According to the Danish historian Hvitfeld, he suffered a great defeat, and was driven out of England (Holberg, i. 125.). There is no intimation of this in our writers, by whom it was not likely to have been overlooked; but Snorre mentions a great victory gained by Ethelred, with Olaf's assistance, in the spring, after the recovery of London, in the lands of Ulfkell, which he calls Hringmaraheide. Antiq. Celto-Scand. 93.

† Mr. Palgrave (p. 303.) thinks this sum was paid to the Danes who "continued in undiminished strength and hostility." I never differ from Mr. Palgrave upon a point of history without some distrust of myself; but in this instance Greenwich is mentioned as the place where the army, to which the payment was made, was stationed; and it is there that Olaf and his people might be expected to be found. Part of the money may, indeed, probably have been paid to Thurkill, who, "choosing rather to remain in a region replenished with all riches, than to return home to his own country that wanted such commodities as were here to be had, compounded with the English, and was retained by king Ethelred with forty ships, and the flower of all the Danes that were men of war."—*Holinshed*, i. 718.

of defending themselves, they were killed by his people: their retainers took refuge in the tower of St. Frideswide's, now Christchurch cathedral; but against this miscreant no sanctuary was secure: it was set on fire by his orders, and they perished in the flames. Whether Ethelred consented to these murders before or after the perpetration, matters little to his guilt in the transaction, or to his general character. If he did not order or authorise the crime, he endeavoured to profit by it, and sent to seize their possessions, and to secure the widow of Sigferth, . . a lady famed for her rank and beauty, and who might, perhaps, soon have found a second husband, able and willing to have taken vengeance for the one of whom she had thus villanously been bereaved. She was carried prisoner to Malmesbury. Edmund the Atheling went secretly to see her there, and the interview led to a marriage, which was kept secret from the king; for Ethelred is said to have been regarded with as little respect by his own family as by foreigners.*

The Danes at this time, as well as the English, had mercenaries in their service †; a proof that society was beginning to settle into something like regularity in the most barbarous parts of Christendom. During Canute's absence, these adventurers held many places for him, if he should return, or for themselves, as the course of events might determine. Olaf recovered Canterbury from them; wasting that city a second time with fire: after which Ethelred employed him in collecting, doubtless for their joint use, the imposts, which nothing but force could have made the people pay. It would not be surprising if this mode of collection excited more discontent than the tax, the burden of which, assuredly, it was not likely to diminish. The Anglo-Danes, on their part, could not but resent the treachery which had been practised upon two of their chiefs; and that resentment was inflamed when they saw that Edmund the Atheling, well known, for his prodigious strength, by the name of Iron-

* Sax. Chron. 193, 194. William of Malmesbury, 219, 220.
† Snorre, Antiq. Celt.-Scand. 103. ‡ Ibid. 95.

side, having married the widow of the one, seized upon the possessions of both. Edric, who, perhaps, had designed those possessions for himself, was at this time plotting the destruction of that prince; and some of those mercenaries who, upon Canute's departure, had passed over to the service of Ethelred, opened now a secret communication with the Danish king, and invited him to return, assuring him of their support. Canute soon got together a fleet of 200 ships, "royally decked, furnished and appointed, both for brave show and necessary furniture of all manner of weapons, arms, and munition." * He sailed first for Sandwich, which seems now to have been the favourite port of the Danes, then to Poole harbour; the whole coast of England being in those days better known to its enemies than to its own sailors; and, making Wareham his naval station, he ravaged the three counties of Dorset, Somerset, and Wiltshire. Ethelred, whose long and disgraceful reign was now drawing towards its close, was lying sick at Corsham, where Edric, who still possessed the confidence of that weak king, collected an army, and Edmund hastened to join him with a force which he had assembled in the north. But when they should have marched against the enemy, Ironside discovered that Edric's intention was to betray him; and found it necessary to return, with those troops who were faithful, to a place where he might feel himself in safety. The traitor then once more revolted, and went over to the enemy with forty ships, which, as they are said to have been manned by Danes, seem to have been a mercenary's fleet. Wessex then submitted, gave hostages, and supplied the invader with horses, .. to be employed against their own countrymen.†

With these miserable circumstances the year closed.

* "So," says Holinshed (i. 718.) "as it is strange to consider that which is written by them that lived in those days, and took in hand to register the doings of that time" I have not met with the descriptions which are here alluded to; but, in the age of piracy, the same sort of pride seems to have been displayed in decorating ships, as in embellishing armour in the age of chivalry.

† Sax. Chron. 194, 195. William of Malmesbury, 221.

A.D. 1016.

Early in the ensuing one, Canute, and Edric with him, advanced into the heart of the country*; they crossed the Thames at Cricklade, and, proceeding into Warwickshire, passed the remaining part of the winter in laying all waste around them with fire and sword. Edmund raised an army in Mercia to oppose them. When he had raised it, the men could not act, it is said, unless the king were with them, and unless they had the assistance of the burgesses of London †: and, as these conditions were not complied with, the army dispersed, giving another proof of the dissolution of government in England. Nevertheless, another effort of authority was made, and Ethelred ordered a general array, requiring every man to take the field, under pain of the highest penalties which the laws appointed for neglect of duty. He himself was the defaulter; for when the force which had thus been brought together sent to him in London, and besought him to join them with all the aid he could collect, he came, indeed, . . but it was only to receive a warning that he must take heed unto himself, and in anywise beware how he gave battle, because those persons on whom he relied meant to betray him. This he believed, as one who had too much cause for believing it; and, forsaking the army, he went back to London. Canute, meantime, was gaining over towns and villages to his party, and, with indefatigable policy, never unemployed, holding councils by night and fighting by day ‡: and Edmund, finding that no successful stand was to be made in Wessex or Mercia, united himself with Uhtred, a Northumbrian earl: but when it was supposed that they would march against the invader, they employed themselves in laying waste the counties of Staffordshire, Shrop-

* "With 160 ships," says the Saxon Chronicle, as if the fleet had co-operated in this expedition: perhaps it ascended the Severn. The Danish ships seem to have navigated any river that is navigable for a coal barge; but at this time they could not pass London Bridge.

† Sax. Chron. 195. William of Malmesbury says, the Mercians repeatedly assembled and stood forward to resist: — "Would but the king come and command whither they were to march, and bring with him the leading men of London, they were ready to shed their blood for their country." (221.) This seems as if, like the Danes, they were stipulating to be paid and fed.

‡ William of Malmesbury, 221.

shire, and Cheshire, in punishment for their submission to the Danes. Edmund Ironside was inferior in courage to no man; but he was as cruel as his competitor, and far inferior to him in ability. While he was thus inflicting additional evils upon his miserable and helpless countrymen, Canute, as a means of counter-policy, but in the same spirit, doing like hurt in all places where he came, went through Buckingham, Bedford, and Huntingdon shires, and so into Northamptonshire, along the fens, to Stamford; then into Lincoln and Nottinghamshire, and on towards York, "not sparing to do what mischief might be devised wherever he went." This had the effect of recalling Uhtred from his marauding career. He hastened northward, "and submitted for need, and all the Northumbrians with him;" but, though he gave hostages, he was put to death by Edric's advice; and Canute gave Northumbria to his own kinsman and ally, earl Eric, one of the most distinguished of the northern chiefs.

Edmund, when this last expedition had terminated as ill as it deserved, went back to London to his father, who ended his unhappy life there on St. George's day. The chiefs who were at that time there agreed with the Londoners in choosing Edmund for their king, overlooking, as in the case of Athelstan, his illegitimate birth for the sake of his personal qualities, and because his legitimate brothers were all too young. In his courage, in his surpassing bodily strength, and in his popular qualities, Edmund Ironside resembled Richard Cœur de Lion; he resembled him also in the prodigality with which his courage was exerted, and in the ill fortune that attended it. His first business was to reduce Wessex to obedience. While he thus was engaged, Canute, who, marching back from the north, had collected all his force at his fleet, moved with his ships to the Thames, and stationed them at Greenwich. London bridge had been so well repaired, that he did not deem it advisable to repeat the hazardous way of assault by which Olaf had forced a passage there; he therefore dug a canal round the Southwark fortress, and brought

his fleet through this channel to the western side of the bridge.* This, which implies extraordinary foresight and perseverance for those times, enabled him to invest London on all sides; so that no one could go in or out. But the citizens, relying upon their heroic king, withstood him, and resisted all his attacks. Edmund hastened from the west to give him battle. An action was fought at Peonnan †, a second at a place called Sceorstane ‡; and this the northern historians represent as one of the most famous battles in those times. It lasted two days. On the second, Edmund encountered the Danish king, and aimed a blow at him with his sword. Canute interposed his shield, so as to save himself; but the stroke was given with such force, that it cleft the shield and the neck of the horse. The Danes rushed in, to protect their king from his terrible adversary; and the traitor, Edric, is said at this crisis to have thrown the English into confusion, by hoisting a head upon a spear, and calling upon the Dorset and Devonshire men to flee, for it was that of their Edmund, who was slain. That brave king could not make the deceit known in time, nor, by his greatest exertions, restore confidence to an army who thought that in losing him they had lost all hopes of victory. He kept the field, however, till night put an end to the contest; and during the night the Danes decamped, not venturing to renew it against one who would have been invincible if personal prowess could have ensured success.§

* Sax. Chron. 197.

† "Near Gillingham," says the Saxon Chronicle (197.), which is near Chatham; and here the Annals of St. Augustine mention, that a sharp battle was fought between Edmund and Canute. (Beauties of England and Wales, viii. 681.) But, according to Camden, the scene of this battle was at Pen, a little village near the source of that stream which gives name to Bruton. (62, 63.)

‡ Gibson supposes this to be Sherston in Wiltshire, because it is near Pen, because several barrows thereabouts put it beyond all dispute that there has been a battle there, and because the inhabitants have a tradition that it was against the Danes. (Camd. 101.) Camden (253.) seems rather to think that the battle was near the Shire stone, which divides four counties, near the village of Long Compton, where, in the circle of stones (complete in his time) called Rolle-ril Stones, he found a monument of some great victory. But I believe such circles were not sepulchral, and the little distance between Sherstone and Pen renders Gibson's conjecture much more probable.

§ Sax. Chron. 197. William of Malmesbury, 222. Turner, ii. 485—488. Antiq. Celt.-Scand. 129, 130.

It is said that Edmund, seeing Edric's treason in the battle, threw a spear at him. The traitor escaped by starting aside; but the weapon was hurled with such force, that it transfixed two soldiers. Yet, so easily was the king deceived, or so accomplished was Edric in all the arts of deceit, that a reconciliation between them was presently brought about. Edmund's credulity may, in some degree, be explained by the early ascendency which Edric, under whom, as a foster-father, he had been bred up, had obtained over him; but there was no correspondent feeling on the other part, for it was in concert with Canute that the traitor now acted, in order to impede the progress of one whom it was more easy to circumvent than to resist in the field. The last battle had the effect of encouraging the West Saxons, who were before divided, to throw off the Danish yoke, and acknowledge their native king; and Edmund was then strong enough to advance to London, and relieve the citizens from their state of siege, driving the enemy toward their ships, which were farther up the river. He pursued; forded the Thames at Brentford, and defeated them with great slaughter: but many of his own people, who went before the army with the hope of plundering, were, through their own folly, drowned; and, while Edmund found it necessary to go into the west for the purpose of recruiting his forces, Canute returned to London, and beset it, and fought strongly against it both by water and land. Weary of the resolute resistance which he found in the citizens, he left the Thames, sailed for the East Anglian coast, entered the Orwell, and, laying Mercia waste with fire and sword, made a destructive circuit to the Medway. By this time Edmund had collected so large a force, that the chronicler calls it all the English nation. He proceeded into Kent, drove the Danes out of the Isle of Shepey; and it is said that he might have then totally defeated Canute, if Edric had not withheld him from pursuing his advantage. His army could not be kept together; and therefore it was to be re-collected, while the enemy

were again ravaging Mercia. Once more Edmund led "the English nation" against their invaders, and a battle was fought at Assandun * in Essex. No former battle ever proved so disastrous to the people of this island; and, except the battle of Hastings, no latter one. For, when Edmund, inspiring his men with his own intrepidity, was on the point of obtaining a great and decisive victory, Edric, with all the force under his command, took flight, leaving him thus to contend against an overpowering superiority of numbers. The bravest chiefs, Ulfkytel was among them, would not survive the overthrow of the nation: they gathered their faithful followers, and, forming a compact body, fought till they perished to a man; the Saxon Chronicle says that all the nobility of the English nation were then cut off. Bishops and abbots, as well as ealdermen, sacrificed themselves in brave despair; but Edmund Ironside, with a braver hope, fled from the field almost alone; not to seek an asylum, but to collect, if possible, another army, and fall upon the Danes while they were exulting over their recent success in the confidence of vain security.†

Canute, acting with equal promptitude, hastened against him as soon as he heard where he was; but such was Edmund's popularity, that, when the Danes entered Gloucestershire, an army had been raised, and of such force as would have rendered the issue of a battle doubtful where there was no traitor to turn the scale. It is said that, when every thing was ready for a general action, Edmund challenged his adversary to a single combat, that the conqueror might enjoy the kingdom as the reward of his own prowess, and all farther effusion of blood on either side be spared. The Dane is said to have declined the unequal adventure, being himself below the mean standard ‡; whereas Ironside, in strength and

* What is supposed to have been the Danish camp may still be traced at Canewdon, which adjoins Ashingdon on the east. It includes about six acres.

† Sax. Chron. 197—199. William of Malmesbury, 223, 224. Antiq. Celt.-Scand. 137.

‡ This cannot be true, because, in the Knytlinga Saga, Canute is described as being of great stature and strength. Antiq. Celt.-Scand. p. 148. Holberg, however (i. 130.), follows Malmesbury's account.

stature, so greatly exceeded most men, that the challenge*, under such circumstances, could be regarded as no proof of gallantry; and it is added, that he proposed a division of the kingdom between them, on the plea that, as each of their fathers had possessed it, each had equal pretensions. The proposal, with whomsoever it may have originated, was supported by Edric, a man whose abilities were as remarkable as his baseness; by all the members of the witan, who were then assembled; and by the general cry of the land for peace. A conference, accordingly, was held at an island called Alney, which the Severn forms close to Gloucester. There was little difficulty concerning terms, when the English had submitted to treat. Edmund consented to what he had no means of opposing, and retained only the old kingdom of Wessex; while Canute took to himself Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, as the lion's share. The two kings now became allies and sworn brothers. On the one part it was such a brotherhood as Cain's: they exchanged arms and garments; they confirmed the treaty with pledges and with oaths; and they settled the pay of the army, . . words which can only imply that the Dane insisted upon a payment of money, as well as this large cession of territory. The money was to be levied upon that part of the kingdom only which Edmund was permitted to retain. The Danes went to their ships with the spoils which they had gathered; they made the Londoners purchase peace at the price of 10,500*l.*; they then brought their ships to London, and provided for themselves winter-quarters; and before the winter set in, Canute was rid of his sworn brother by death. The contemporary chronicler barely states that Edmund died, and was buried

* It is not mentioned by the Saxon Chronicler, nor by the author of the Knytlinga Saga. Both may have omitted the circumstance (if it really occurred), as not honourable to Canute; for this part of the Chronicle was probably written under the Danish dynasty. William of Malmesbury is, I believe, the oldest author on whose authority it rests; and Henry Huntingdon adds to his account, that the combat took place, and that Canute, finding himself likely to be defeated, proposed terms. The story may be suspected to have had its origin in some lay composed when Edmund Ironside was fresh in remembrance as a popular hero.

with his grandfather, Edgar, at Glastonbury; but the northern historians assert that he perished by Canute's orders, and by the agency of Edric Streone.*

A.D. 1017.

This event put an end to the long struggle between the English and the Danes, . . a struggle in which the Danes prevailed because of their naval power. Canute found no difficulty now in taking to himself the whole government. He deemed it expedient at first to give Mercia to Edric as the price of his manifold treasons, and to reward his confederates Thurkill and Eric with East Anglia and Northumbria; retaining only Wessex to himself, but with the supreme authority. He soon, however, found means of putting Edric to death; and afterwards an opportunity occurred of expelling the two northern adventurers; for Canute was not scrupulous as to any means whereby his power might be extended or secured. A half-brother of Edmund's, then but a child, was put to death as soon as he could get him into his hands; and the two infants whom Edmund had left would have shared the same fate, if he had not been warned not to provoke the English, by whom the memory of this brave and unfortunate king was long and affectionately cherished. He sent them, upon this, into Sweden, with the intention that they should there be destroyed; but the king of that country preserved them by sending them into Hungary, where they found a generous protector in king Salomon. The two sons whom Ethelred had left by Emma were safe under their uncle's protection in Normandy. Canute secured himself against any danger from that quarter by seeking and obtaining their mother in marriage; and when he found himself really as well as nominally king of England,

* Sax. Chron. 199, 200. William of Malmesbury, 224, 225. Antiq. Celt.-Scand. 139. Holinshed (i. 726.) inclines to the opinion that Edmund died a natural death: the Encomium Emmæ is his authority, where it is said that "God, being mindful of his old doctrine, that every kingdom divided in itself cannot long stand, shortly after took Edmund out of this life, and by such means seemed to take pity upon the English kingdom; lest, if both the kings should have continued in life together, they should both have lived in great danger, and the land in trouble."

he began to act as if he had the interest of the country at heart. It was necessary to relieve it from the burden of these troops by whose services the conquest had been obtained; but the payment, which, by the treaty with Edmund, was to have been raised upon Wessex alone, and which amounted to the then enormous sum of 72,000*l.*, besides what the Londoners had paid, was levied upon the whole of England, all now being equally his subjects. He then sent the greater part of his army to Denmark, retaining only forty ships. The next proof of his wisdom was, that he made the Danes consent to live under the laws of the land, as they had been established by Edgar. In most respects the conquest by Canute proved beneficial to England, because from that time forth the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Danes became one people; ultimately it was not less so to Denmark, though that kingdom seemed at first to become an appendage to the wealthier and more civilised one which it had subdued.* That countries so remote from each other should be united under one government can seldom be convenient; that they should long continue so is never likely, and was in that age impossible. This Canute seems well to have understood; and, preferring England for his abode, and giving it the first place in his titles, he took every possible means for introducing English civilisation into Denmark. There was no money in that country, except what was introduced by piracy, till Canute's coinage †; his were the first written laws in Denmark, and he derived them from English sources; he was the first northern king who encouraged commerce, .. the sole trade, if such it may be called, which had existed till then being such piratical partnerships ‡ as exist at this day among the Barbary states, and cannot be said to be wholly extinct in Christian countries, so long as privateering is sanctioned by the laws. And though he did not live to the age of forty, he yet reigned long enough to see the seeds of improvement take root and flourish

A.D. 1018.

* Holberg, i. 133. 140. † Ibid. 151. ‡ Ibid. 116.

'in Denmark;' to know that the system of piracy, by aid of which he had established his own sovereignty, was so materially curbed, that it could no longer affect the fate of kingdoms; and to re-establish the strength of England and its naval power, wherein its strength and its best means of defence essentially consisted.

No anecdote is better known and more frequently repeated than that of Canute taking his seat upon the sea-shore, and, as the Lord of Ocean, forbidding the rising waves to approach and wet his feet; not in the insane supposition that the sea would hear and obey his voice, but that he might read a moral lesson * to those who were about his person. The story is in character with a stage of society in which symbolical actions were found necessary for impressing the minds of men; and with the personage himself, .. for prosperity had softened, not corrupted him, and he is one of the few conquerors whose greater and better qualities were developed in peace. † But although that scene was designed for the purpose of making the declaration of his devotional feelings more striking; the power which he possessed authorised his assertion, that the seas belonged to his dominion. No other king ‡, either Scandinavian or British, has ruled over such extensive possessions in Europe: he was king of England, Denmark, Norway, and part of Sweden; and Scotland and Cambria might have been added to his titles, for it was not an empty boast that the Basileus, as he styled himself, of the Anglo-Saxons, ruled over six nations. He was called Canute the Rich, as well as Canute the Great. It is more remarkable, that, though he was but in his twentieth year at the time of his father's death, and reigned only twenty-one years, he should also have been called Canute the Old §; but this was because, among his tur-

* According to Selden (ii. 1325.) a political one as well:—"Ipsum se interea maris dominatorem æque ac insulæ, esse, palam est hic professus."

† The character of this great king has never been more justly appreciated than by Mr. Turner, ii. 504—513.

‡ Holinshed, i. 730. Holberg, i. 117.

§ Holberg, i. 148. note. The name, which was variously written Knutr, Knud, Cnut, and Chnut, was extended into Canutus by the pope,

bulent countrymen, few kings had reigned so long, and they measured his life by his reign. It was long enough for those great purposes which were effected in the order of Providence through his instrumentality. The struggle between the Danes and Anglo-Saxons, which had continued more than 200 years, was finally ended by his accession; and fifty years of comparative tranquillity after his decease completed the healing work which he had begun, and united the two nations by the close and indissoluble ties of blood, language, and religion.

How greatly the commerce, and consequently the naval strength of England, had improved under his reign, appears by the remarkable fact, that the seamen of London are said to have borne a great part in determining the succession, and choosing an elder son of Canute's, Harold Harefoot by name, instead of Hardicanute, whom earl Godwin and the people of Wessex would have preferred, because queen Emma, a favourite with the English, was his mother. It was not in any tumultuous assembly that their voice was heard, but in the Witenagemot, the great council of the realm, held at Oxford*; and the persons who represented the merchants of London were, no doubt †, such merchants themselves as having fulfilled the condition required by Athelstane, had advanced themselves to the rank of thanes. Canute, at his death, had wisely divided an empire, consisting of dominions so extensive and so far apart, that they could not be kept together by any hand less vigorous than his own. A division of England, which he had not in-

A.D. 1035.

who, in the twelfth century, canonised the royal saint so called. (Ibid. i. 197.) I suppose the history of Abraham served as a precedent; though the vowel was evidently inserted *euphoniæ gratiâ*, and, instead of altering the meaning of the name *honoris causâ*, deprived it of its meaning. The first to whom the name is said to have been given, was exposed in the woods immediately after his birth, and was so called from the *knot* (*knut*) of a silken handkerchief which was bound round his head, and in which some gold was tied up. Ihre gives this account from the History of Olaf Tryggusen. But he adds, that *cnut*, or *cnaut*, signifies in Anglo-Saxon, bald, *Latino-barbarè*, *Canutus*: and this is the more likely etymology, an obvious meaning being more to be trusted than a romantic tale.

* Sax. Chron. 207.

† Henry, ii. 418.

tended, had nearly been made now; for Godwin held Wessex in Hardicanute's name, while London and all north of the Thames acknowledged Harold; but as Hardicanute offended his party by lingering in Denmark, Harold was "chosen king over all." During his short reign, the navy was maintained upon the same establishment as in the latter years of his father, sixteen ships, and in the same manner.* When Hardicanute was sent for to succeed him, he came with a fleet of sixty sail to take possession, and soon lost the good will, not only of the nation but of his own partisans, by exacting ship-money for sixty-two ships at the old rate of assessment. 21,099*l*. was the sum raised: and in the year ensuing half that sum for thirty-two ships. The persons who collected this tax at Worcester were killed by the people, though they sought shelter in the cathedral; in vengeance for which, that city was burnt, the citizens' property given over as a spoil to those who were sent to punish them, and great part of the county laid waste. This drew upon the king the curses of the people, which were, probably, more due to his counsellors than to him; for though he inherited few of his father's virtues, and none of his great qualities, he was of an easy, affable, and generous temper. He gave way, indeed, to an abominable impulse of revenge when he ordered Harold's body to be disinterred, beheaded, and cast into the Thames, from whence it was dragged out in a fisherman's net, and buried in the

A.D. 1040.

* On hiſ dagum man, geald xvi ſcipan æt ælcere hamulan viii mare. (Sax. Chron. 211.) "At the rate of eight marks for each steersman," Mr. Ingram renders this. Henry (ii. 419.) says, "Each mariner was allowed eight mancusses, and each commander twelve mancusses a year for pay and provisions, which was a very liberal allowance for those times." This diligent and most respectable historian (who follows Holinshed here) is certainly wrong; and the ratio which he has given between the allowances ought to have made him suspect this. *Hamn* is explained by Ihre as denoting the certain number of persons who, from a certain portion of land, were taken for the sea service, forty-two such *hamnas*, according to one authority, constituting a ship's company: but this must have depended on the size of the ship. The word in the Saxon Chronicle has, in all likelihood, the same meaning, as well as the same origin.

William of Malmesbury says, that this "rigid and intolerable tribute" was exacted in order that the king might pay twenty marks, according to his promise, to every soldier in his fleet.

cemetery of the Danes; but the shame of advising this has been cast upon Alphric, the archbishop of York; and in Hardicanute the excess of hatred had its cause in strong natural affection, his brother Alfred having been most cruelly and treacherously put to death by that king's orders.

Toward the living persons who were implicated in that tragedy he was more placable; from the bishop of Crediton he was satisfied with a pecuniary atonement; and he allowed earl Godwin to exculpate himself by oath. That powerful earl presented him with a ship, splendidly equipped and manned; its stern was covered with gilding, and there were eighty soldiers on board, each having two bracelets on either arm, weighing sixteen ounces of gold; their helmets were gilt, they were armed in gilt habergeons, and each bore a Danish axe on his left shoulder and a spear in his right hand, both arms and armour being inlaid with silver and gold, and all so adorned, says an early historian, as that splendour, vying with terror, might conceal the iron beneath the gold. The gift, doubtless, was chosen as that which would be most acceptable to a maritime prince; and the splendour of the equipment marks the increasing refinement of the age. When the sister of this king was given in marriage to the emperor Henry III., the solemnity of her espousals was rendered so imposing, and so great were the pomp and pageantry with which she was conducted to the place of embarkation, that 100 years afterwards ballads, describing it, used to be sung about the streets.* These things show the wealth of the country; they show also how rapidly it had recovered from its losses, and prospered under a strong government, which secured it against invaders, and maintained order at home.

Hardicanute died of apoplexy in the second year of his reign, at a feast, and in the act of drinking; and the people of London immediately chose his half brother, Edward, the only surviving son of Ethelred, to succeed him. The kingdoms of England and Denmark were

* William of Malmesbury, 239.

thus separated. Norway had previously been recovered from its Danish king by Magnus, the son of king St. Olaf; and Magnus and Hardicanute had made an agreement, to the observance of which twelve of the chief persons in each kingdom had sworn, that the survivor should inherit the other's dominions. The object of this agreement was to secure the perpetual and peaceful union of Norway with Denmark; but on Hardicanute's death, when Magnus had succeeded to the Danish throne, he laid claim to that of England also, by virtue of this agreement, and sent an embassy thither to make his pretensions known; intimating, that if his right were not willingly acknowledged, he would come with a Danish and Norwegian fleet, and recover the possessions of his predecessor. On this occasion, Edward, cold and feeble as he was, replied to the ambassadors with English spirit. "Canute, my step-father," said he, "kept the kingdom from me, and his sons took it to themselves after him. God has now been pleased to restore it me, and I will defend it to the last drop of my blood." When this reply was repeated to Magnus, he made answer, "King Edward may keep his father's kingdom in peace for me; and I will content myself with those which God has given me."* The Confessor, as he was afterwards called, placed little reliance upon this declaration; and one of the few acts of vigour which he ever performed was to embark on board the fleet, and take his station with it at Sandwich, to guard against the invasion which he expected †; but Magnus had no intention of invading him. Soon afterwards, Sweyne, who contended for the crown of Denmark, proposed to Edward to assist him with fifty ships; but it is said that all the people thought this unwise; and it was prevented, because Magnus had a large navy, and expelled his competitor. ‡

* Pontanus, 173. Holberg, i. 155. 162.

† The Saxon Chronicle says, that Magnus was prevented from coming hither by his contests with Sweyne in Denmark; but the Danish historians give Magnus the Good credit for the sincerity as well as the moderation of his reply, and notice it as one of the best acts of his illustrious life.

‡ Sax. Chron. 212—216.

After the death of Magnus, Sweyne again solicited the aid of a fleet, and it was again resisted by the people. The motive of their resistance perhaps was, that, since the death of Canute, the seas were again infested by pirates. Two sea rovers, Lothen and Irling by name, came to Sandwich with five-and-twenty ships, and carried off a great booty in gold and silver, and prisoners. They then attempted to plunder the Isle of Thanet, but the inhabitants withstood them both by land and sea, and drove them from that coast. Upon this they made for the opposite coast of Essex, and there made spoil of whatever they could find; prisoners being especially valued, for the slave-trade in which such merchants dealt. They found a market for their booty in the ports of Baldwin, earl of Flanders; and having there disposed of it, they returned eastward to their own country. Sandwich was again plundered in the ensuing year, and the Isle of Wight, where the best inhabitants were slain in defending themselves. Edward and his chiefs put to sea in quest of the enemy, without overtaking them. Naval aid was now requested of him by the emperor, who was about to lead an army against earl Baldwin, and wished Edward to cut off the escape of his enemy by sea. This the people seemed to have considered as a national concern, because of the harbour which Baldwin afforded to the sea-rovers; and Edward accordingly lay at Sandwich with a large fleet, till the emperor had reduced that earl to submission. For a while this seems to have checked the reviving spirit of piracy; and though earl Sweyne, one of Godwin's turbulent sons, at one time infested the coast, and at another a fleet of six-and-thirty ships from Ireland, with the aid of the Welsh king, Edward ventured to diminish his naval force, retaining only fourteen ships, which he reduced the same year to four, and the next laid them up also. He then abolished the danegelt, which had continued thirty-nine years from its first imposition by Ethelred: this was a great relief to the people, for it

A.D. 1047.

1048.

was always exacted before any other impost; and they were vexed with many.*

England might now have been at rest, if the prospect of an uncertain succession to the crown had not offered tempting opportunities for ambition and intrigues. The king vacillated between his habitual fear of earl Godwin's formidable family, and his inclination for the Normans, among whom he had grown up; when the latter feeling prevailed, Godwin and his sons were exiled; they found an asylum with Baldwin at Bruges, and from thence returned, "after the manner of rovers," to infest their own country. Forces were assembled by sea and land to oppose them; the weather, which baffled the exiles in their first attempt, wrought eventually in their favour; for the men on board the king's fleet, weary of waiting for the invaders, and perhaps unwilling to act against a family who had a strong party in the country, and, with all their faults, were popular, forsook the ships, and went each his way. Godwin then found the coast at his mercy. He made first for the Isle of Wight, plundered it, proceeded to Portland, and there, in the brief but expressive language of the Chronicle, he and his people did harm as much as they could do. At the same time Harold, the most illustrious of his sons, entered the Bristol channel with nine ships from Ireland, landed in Porlock bay, so often the beautiful scene of piratical invasion, and there routed the land forces which from Devon and Somerset were mustered against him, with the slaughter of more than thirty good thanes. Returning then to the mouth of the channel, he rounded the land's end. He landed there, and seized cattle, men, money, and whatever he could; joined his father on the southern coast, and proceeded to the Isle of Wight, thence to glean what Godwin had left from the harvest of his spoil. Yet these exiles, mercilessly as they acted towards their own countrymen, were popular, so little do the people judge of men according to their deeds! They were joined as

A.D. 1051.

1052.

* Sax. Chron. 216—225.

they advanced by all the ships at Pevensey, Romney, Hithe, and Folkstone. Godwin had already won over to him "all the Kentish men, and the boatmen from Hastings, and every where about by the sea coast, and all the men of Essex, and Sussex, and Surrey, and many others, who declared that they would live or die with him." From Dover and from Sandwich they took as many ships and hostages as they chose, then made sail for London; but some of their people on the way landed on the Isle of Shepey, and ravaged it, and burnt Milton to the ground.

Edward was awaiting them at London, with the earls of his party, fifty ships, and a great land force. When Godwin and Harold approached, they sent to the king, and required the restoration of their estates and dignities; alleging, that they had been wrongfully deprived of them. On which side the right lay, it is now not possible to determine; probably both had been so much in the wrong, that a strong plea might be made out on either part... as in parties, and factions, and civil wars, is commonly the case. Godwin saw that public opinion had begun to declare itself in his favour; and when, upon the king's resisting his demands, his followers became clamorous for immediate action, he represt their ardour. Edward summoned more forces to his support from the interior. Godwin, on his part, held secret communication with the citizens, and succeeded in winning them over wholly to his will, while he lay with his fleet before London, waiting for the flood. When his arrangements were complete, and the tide served, the fleet weighed anchor and passed the bridge, keeping the south side of the river; his land forces advanced at the same time, and drew up on the Strand, which was then, as its name implies, an open shore... taking a position which seemed as if they meant, with the aid of their ships, to surround the king's fleet. Edward would have been strong enough to have given them battle both by land and water, if there had been the same temper in his party, as in that of the exiles; but

there were few foreigners on either side, and while Godwin's men were eager to right (as they believed) their leader by force of arms, there was a great unwillingness in the king's people to fight with their own countrymen. They had not, like their opponents, any thing to gain by victory; and woeful experience had taught them that the effect of such contests was to render their land an easy prey for foreign enemies. "Wise men," therefore, as they are called, were appointed on both sides to negotiate; hostages were exchanged, a general council was immediately convened, and peace was presently concluded; the king believing, or of necessity seeming to believe, the protestations of fidelity made by Godwin and Harold, and submitting to have his Norman* friends outlawed by the now ascendant party.

In all the wars with which this unhappy age of English history abounds, more reliance seems to have been placed upon the fleets than upon the land forces; no doubt because great part of the country was covered with woods. If an army did not find its means of subsistence wherever it moved, it was almost impossible to transport them otherwise than by water. When earl Siward defeated and slew Macbeth, and brought back from Scotland "such spoil as no man had before obtained," he had a fleet† to co-operate with him. The English had been compelled to learn seamanship by their long struggle with the Danes; they had not yet learnt from the same enemy to be good horse-soldiers; and in opposing an army of Welsh and Irish at Hereford, they suffered a shameful defeat, because their leader had brought them into the field, contrary to their custom, on horseback, and they took to flight before a spear was thrown. The Welsh king Griffith had taken advantage of the feuds by which England was

A.D. 1054.

1055.

* The Saxon Chronicle calls them French, and the other Frenchmen it calls Frankś. Taking part with the triumphant party here, it says that "the French had instituted bad laws, and judged unrighteous judgment, and brought bad councils into the land," p. 239.

† Sax. Chron. 242.

disturbed, frequently to infest the English borders; he was an enterprising prince, and he had the stronger motive of revenging his brother's fate, who, because of his celebrity as a marauder, had been put to death by Edward's command; his head, like that of a criminal, being brought to Gloucester. Sometimes with the aid of the exiled earl Algar, sometimes with Irish adventurers, and once with an auxiliary fleet from Normandy, he obtained successes enough to bring at last a formidable invasion upon his country, and destruction upon himself. Harold marched against him in the winter from Gloucester to Rhuddlan, where he had a palace or castle, and where his fleet lay; he burnt the strong-hold, and the ships, and all the stores belonging to them. Griffith escaped; but in the spring Harold sailed with a naval force from Bristol to the coast of North Wales, while his brother Tostig led an army into that country; the inhabitants submitted, and Griffith was slain by one of his own people; his head was sent to the king, with the head and rigging of his ship also; trophies which would not have been selected, unless this brave prince had made himself conspicuous as a maritime foe.*

A.D. 1063.

It is related, that when the minds of the English were turned with fearful hope, during the Danish dynasty, towards Edward, a monk of Glastonbury saw in a dream St. Peter anoint him king. The monk ventured to ask who should be his successor? and the Apostle answered, "Have thou no care for that! for the kingdom of England is God's kingdom."—"Which, surely," says old Ralph Holinshed†, "in good earnest may appear by many great arguments to be full true, unto such as shall well consider the state of this realm from time to time, how there hath been ever governors raised up to maintain the majesty of the kingdom, and to reduce the same to its former dignity, when by any unfortunate mishap it hath been brought in danger." If what is called the philosophy of history is not set forth by writers of his

* Sax. Chron. 240. 244. 251, 252.

† Vol. I. 738.

stamp, something which springs from a deeper root is sometimes found in its stead. "It would make a diligent and marking reader," he says*, "both muse and mourn, to see how variable the state of this kingdom hath been; and thereby to fall into a consideration of the frailty and uncertainty of this mortal life, which is no more free from insecurity than a ship on the sea in tempestuous weather. For as the casualties, wherewith our life is inclosed and beset with round about, are manifold, so also are they miserable, so also are they sudden, so also are they unavoidable. And true it is that the life of man is in the hands of God, and the state of kingdoms doth also belong unto him, either to continue or discontinue." It had been too surely foreseen that Edward's death would draw after it the evils of a disputed succession. Edward himself foresaw this; but the right of hereditary descent was so little recognised, when it was not supported by personal desert, or by a strong party, that he disregarded what otherwise would have been the undoubted claim of Edgar Atheling, and designated his friend and kinsman, William of Normandy, to succeed him. But it is said, also, that the general corruption of manners made a deep impression on his religious mind, and that because of the sins of the nation he apprehended some national visitation. Such an apprehension was general; and the appearance of a comet † at this time confirmed it. "Thou art come," a monk of Malmesbury is said to have exclaimed, with prophetic feeling, on beholding the blazing star, "thou art come, to be lamented of many a mother! Long since I saw thee; but I behold thee now far more terrible, threatening destruction to this country!" That the comet was thus regarded is certain; and that, as portending change, it raised the hopes of those who were preparing to invade England, as much as it alarmed the English. But when legendary writers relate how the soul of a beatified monk appeared to Edward in

* Vol. I. 726.
† Sax. Chron. 257. William of Malmesbury, 288.

his last sickness, while he lay in a trance, and told him, that the chiefs of England, as well the clergy as the laity, were not the ministers of God but of the devil, and that therefore, after his death, God would deliver over the kingdom to the Enemy;...and when they say that, in another dream, the king beheld the Seven Sleepers turn in their sleep, as if disturbed, and knew thereby that dreadful calamities were at hand;... the one tale is an example of monkish invention, the other a proof of the general corruption which rendered the nation ripe for vengeance. The justice of the visitation which ensued was acknowledged by the sufferers themselves; and the merciful purpose with which it was dispensed is now not less apparent to those who contemplate the providential course of history. Such miseries as the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles had brought upon the Romanized Britons, such miseries were, in their turn, inflicted upon them by the Danes; and now when the kindred though hostile tribes had been, as it were, welded into one people, the recent conquerors were to feel the misery of being conquered.

The Saxon line, which had continued five centuries and a half, from the time of Cerdic the first king of Wessex, ended in Edward the Confessor; Harold, who succeeded him, having no pretension by his blood, but taking the crown either by election, or by his own act and deed, as one who thought himself able to maintain it. He knew that he must contend for it against the duke of Normandy, who had great power and great personal ability wherewith to enforce a claim, more plausible though less popular than his own. But his first danger was from his brother Tostig, one of the most atrocious barbarians in that barbarous age, yet who was not without that magnanimity which is compatible with the fiercer vices, and who possessed, in an eminent degree, the good as well as the evil qualities whereby his family were distinguished. After an act of monstrous wickedness, which might be deemed incredible, if parallels to it were not found in the early history of other

A.D. 1066.

nations, he had taken refuge in count Baldwin's territories, then the common asylum of all outlaws and freebooters. From thence he repaired to Denmark, and solicited his kinsman, king Svend Estridsen, to undertake the conquest of England, encouraging him by the example of Canute his uncle. But Svend replied, that it had been an enterprise of great hazard and uncertainty for Canute, though he had undisputed possession both of Denmark and Norway at that time; whereas he himself could with difficulty maintain himself in Denmark against the Norwegians. It behoved him, therefore, to limit his ambition by his means, and not attempt what he could not reasonably hope to accomplish. Tostig upon this left him angrily, saying, he should perhaps find a king who would not be deterred by the apprehension of danger from undertaking great things. Accordingly he went to Norway, and succeeded in persuading king Harold Hardrada to the adventure ... an unhappy hour for both. Returning forthwith to Flanders, he collected there as large a fleet as he was able to equip; and finding followers among those adventurers who were the pests of Europe, he sailed for the Isle of Wight, where he obtained money and provisions, and then ravaged the coast till he came to Sandwich. Harold gathered, meantime, in preparation both against him and William, a larger force, both by sea and land, than any king before him had collected in this island. Tostig did not venture to encounter him: but pressing seamen from Sandwich into his service, sailed with threescore ships for the Humber, landed in Lindsey, and "there slew many good men." This brought upon him the earls Edwin and Morcar, great but unfortunate names in the history of their times. They drove him from the land, the seamen took advantage of this reverse to make their escape, and he fled to Scotland, with only twelve small vessels in his company, there to expect the coming of his Norwegian allies.

Harold Hardrada, confident in his own fortunes not

less than in his personal prowess and military talents, on both which he might well rely, had summoned half the military and naval force of Norway for the expedition. The Norwegians had great confidence in their king; but there were many who thought he was engaging in a most arduous enterprise, where he would have to contend with a warlike people, and with a force of well-trained soldiers *, selected for their strength. A great fleet was equipped, consisting of about 200 sail, besides store-ships, and vessels of smaller size, to the number of 500 in all, . . . the most powerful armament that had ever sailed from Norway. Before he departed, he caused the shrine wherein the body of his half-brother, king St. Olaf, was deposited to be opened, and cut the nails and the hair of his holy corpse to take with him as relics, after which he is said to have re-locked the shrine, and thrown the keys into the river Nid, in order that it might never again be violated even with so pious an intent. But an ominous dream disturbed the confidence which he might have placed in these supposed amulets: he himself, it was reported, saw St. Olaf in a vision, and heard from him mournful anticipations of his defeat and death. One of his chiefs dreamt that eagles and carrion crows alighted upon every ship, and that a woman of dreadful countenance and gigantic form, who stood upon an island, holding a crooked sword in one hand, and in the other a huge vessel, called upon these birds of the battle-field, and bade them rejoice in expectation of the banquet which was prepared for them. Another chief beheld, in a vision, the Norwegian army drawn up in battle

* Snorre (Antiq. Celto-Scand. 197.) represents the Norwegians as saying, that the soldiers called Thingamanna consisted of such men, that one of them was worth more than two of the best of Harold Hardrada's army. This may have been said after the event, to lessen the mortification of their overthrow. The Thingamanna were mercenaries, and this the name (if I am not mistaken in its derivation) implies: they were in that age what the Brabanzons were in Cœur-de-Lion's, and the Swiss in that of Francis I., except that they were not of any one nation, but adventurers, outlaws, and ruffians from all. Their power seems to have been greatest in Sweyne's time; shortly after his death, a great body of them were massacred in Sleswic. (Ibid. 101—103.)

array, and the English in array against them; but before the English host there went forth a giantess as if leading them to victory. She rode a wolf of size proportionate to her own stature, and fed him with human bodies as fast as he could devour them. These popular fables show how deep an impression was made in the North by the issue of this great expedition, the last hostile one from Scandinavia that ever reached the English shores in any formidable strength.*

The fleet touched at the Orkneys, where Harold left his queen Ellisif, with his daughters Maria and Ingegerdi, and from whence he brought away a large reinforcement of adventurers. Making then for England, and entering the mouth of the Tees, he landed in the district then called Klifland †, where the inhabitants submitted without resistance. The first opposition which he found was at Scarborough; and here he had recourse to a mode of attack which had long before been practised upon that coast ‡, and is characteristic of warfare in its rudest state: a huge pile of wood was erected close to the walls or ramparts, and over-topping them, and when the flames were at their height, the burning materials were, by means of long poles, thrust down into the town till some of the houses were set on fire; the place was then taken, and plundered. The inhabitants of the surrounding country then submitted to his mercy, and he advanced with his fleet to the Humber. Thus far all had proceeded prosperously with Tostig and his ally. The Anglo-Saxon king, more apprehensive of a descent from Normandy than from Norway, had assembled both his sea and land forces upon the southern coast, taking his own station in the Isle of

* Antiq. Celto-Scand. 193—200.

† "Upon this part of the coast," says Camden (752.) "when the winds are laid, and the sea in a still calm, the waters thereof being spread into a flat plain, very often a hideous groaning is suddenly heard here, and then the fishermen are afraid to go to sea; who, according to their poor sense of things, believe the ocean to be a huge monster, which is then hungry, and eager to glut itself with men's bodies."

‡ An instance of it, upon which one of St. Aidan's miracles was grafted, is related by Bede, lib. iii. c. xvi. It is noticed in my Letters to Mr. Butler, vindicating the Book of the Church, p. 197.

Wight. There he had remained all the summer, and till the nativity of the Virgin Mary (September 8th), at which time it was then usual for the people to lay in their provision for the winter; and then, says the Saxon chronicle, "no man could keep them there any longer." They were, therefore, necessarily disbanded, and many of their ships were wrecked on their way to London. Harold had hastened thither by land in consequence of tidings that the Norwegian fleet had entered the Humber, and were ascending the Ouse towards York. Upon this hastily collecting an army, he marched northward with all the speed that the exigency required.

Meantime earls Edwin and Morcar, who had baffled Tostig in his first adventure, brought together all the force of the adjacent country, and prepared to attack the invaders. Harold Hardrada drew up his army to give them battle, on the right bank of the Ouse, not far from York, and to the south of that city. One wing rested upon the river, the other upon a ditch, and a wide marsh which was at that time covered with water; the line on that side was designedly, as it appears, left weak, the strength of his host being in the right wing, where he had planted his banner, known by the barbarous name of Landeyda, the waster of land. As he had expected, the earls attacked and forced the weaker flank: so doing, they exposed themselves to a decisive charge from his main force, and were overthrown with great slaughter. Many were drowned in the ditch, and so many perished in the marsh, that the Norwegians are said to have traversed it upon the bodies of their enemies.* The earls, and as many as escaped, took shelter in York; but when Harold Hardrada approached the city, and encamped near Stamford Bridge to besiege it, the inhabitants, for Tostig had partisans among them, opened their gates, and submitted to his

* Antiq. Celto-Scand. 201—203. The Icelandic author erroneously supposes Morcar to have fallen in this action; in other points, his account is confirmed by the Saxon Chronicle.

mercy. An assembly was convened without the city, in which they performed homage to him, as their king by right of conquest; and after the assembly he returned to his ships in the joy of victory. This was on Sunday, the 24th of September; the battle had been fought on the preceding Wednesday, being the eve of St. Matthias; and a meeting had been appointed for the Monday within the city, at which the Norwegian conqueror was to appoint officers, give laws, and distribute lands. The citizens gave hostages and supplied provisions, and peace had been proclaimed to all who would go southward with Tostig and the king, and serve them in completing the conquest of the realm.*

While they were rejoicing at their ships, Harold, who had hastened day and night, reached York, with the vanguard of his army, on the Sunday evening. The great body of the inhabitants hated Tostig because of his cruelties: he was therefore joyfully received, and the gates were shut and the walls guarded, that no information might be carried to the invaders. On the morrow, Hardrada, little deeming that such an enemy was at hand, prepared for his advance, appointing one third of his people to remain with the fleet under Olaf, his son, two earls of the Orkneys, Paul and Erlendr by name, and his especial favourite Eysteinn Orri, the most distinguished of the Norwegian chiefs, to whom his daughter Maria had been promised in marriage. The morning was unusually bright and hot; and the Norwegians, expecting to be engaged that day in nothing but civil occupations and ceremonies, left their hauberks on board, wearing no other defensive armour than the shield and helmet; they had their usual weapons, for these were never laid aside, and some were armed as archers, but all were high in spirits, and in the hope of speedily effecting the easy conquest of a great and rich kingdom. As they approached they discovered a great body of men advancing to meet them, and through the

* Antiq. Celto-Scand. 204, 205. Sax. Chron. 359—361.

dust which arose from the trampling of their horses, the glittering of shields and breast-plates was perceived. Hardrada halted his men, and sent for Tostig to enquire of him who these might be. Tostig replied, that verily it looked like a hostile army; yet, possibly, it might prove to be his own friends and kinsmen coming to solicit pardon, and offer their services, and plight their faith. A few minutes' delay made it evident that the host which advanced came prepared for battle; and Tostig then advised that they should return with all speed to the ships, there to arm themselves, and bring their whole force into the field, or to have the protection of the ships if it should be thought best not to encounter the enemy's cavalry. This advice was rejected by Hardrada, either from a high sense of honour, unseasonably indulged; or because he thought that a precipitate retreat might dishearten his own people, and afford opportunity of advantage to the enemy. He ordered Frirekr, his standard-bearer, to set up his standard . . the Waster of Lands; sent three messengers at full speed to summon the remainder of his army from the ships; and determined upon giving the English battle, in a brave confidence that he could keep his ground till the reinforcement should be brought up.

Having so resolved, he drew up his men in a long but not a dense line, and bending both wings back till they met, formed them into a close circle, every where of equal depth, shield touching shield, presenting thus a rampart of bucklers. The Landeyda was planted in the centre, and by it the king and his chosen companions were to have their station, in readiness to face the danger on any side. This array was chosen as the best means of defence against a far superior cavalry, accustomed to charge in a great body, and if it were repulsed, to wheel round, and repeat its attack upon any point that appeared least guarded. The first line was instructed to present a circle of spears to the enemy, holding them obliquely at a great elevation, and resting their ends upon the earth; this required that they should

place one knee to the ground. The second line stood erect, holding their spears in readiness to pierce the breasts of the horses who should break through the first row. The archers also were stationed to assist them. If Hardrada acted imprudently in waiting for the enemy, his dispositions were made with equal promptitude and skill. Having thus arranged his men, he rode round the circle, inspecting it, and was thus engaged when the English army drew near enough for Harold to distinguish him, and enquire who he was; for he was rendered conspicuous by his splendid helmet, his sky-blue mantle, and the black horse, with a white star on the forehead, which he rode. The horse stumbled and threw him, but without hurt: he sprung lightly upon his feet, and said that such a fall omened good success in his expedition; but Harold gave a different interpretation to the accident, and said, the king of Norway is a strong and comely person, but I augur that fortune has forsaken him.*

Presently twenty horsemen, men and horse in complete mail, approached from the English army, as if to parley, and one of them asked if earl Tostig were in the field. Tostig answered for himself, saying, "You know he is to be found here!" The horseman then, in the name of his brother, king Harold, offered him peace and the whole of Northumbria; or, if that were too little, the third part of the kingdom. "This is different, indeed," replied the earl, "from the enmity, the war, and the contumely with which no longer ago than in the winter I was treated: had this offer been made then, many who have perished might have been now among the living, and far happier had been the condition of England! But if I should accept these conditions, what compensation for his expedition shall I offer to king Harold Hardrada, the son of Sigurd?" The horseman replied, "Seven feet of English ground, .. or a little more, seeing that he exceeds other men in stature!" Tostig made answer to that stern reply, "Go, bid king Harold make

* Antiq. Celto-Scand. 207—209.

ready for battle! When the Northmen relate the history of this day, they shall never say that earl Tostig, when the fight was about to begin, forsook king Harold Hardrada, the son of Sigurd, and joined his enemies. We have one mind and one determination, either to die an honourable death, or to possess England by the right of conquest." Here the conference ended, the horsemen returned to their own army; and Hardrada then enquired of Tostig if he knew who the man was who had spoken so proudly. Tostig replied, it was Harold himself, the king, earl Godwin's son. Upon this, Hardrada observed this had been concealed too long, for they had approached so near that Harold might never have returned to relate of their slaughter. "Right," replied Tostig; "he acted with an incautiousness unworthy of so great a prince, for what thou sayest might easily have happened. But when I saw that he offered me peace and an ample kingdom, and that if I betrayed him I should be guilty of his death, I chose rather, if such must be the alternative, that he should slay me, than that I should, in such a manner, slay him."* Whether this be historically true, or whether the northern historian thought it allowable to embellish his narrative with fiction as well as with verse, the circumstance is equally in the spirit of the times; and such circumstances are of the highest value. They are as consolatory to a thoughtful and religious mind, as they are delightful to a poetical imagination, for they exhibit that heroic dignity and sense of honour which were the redeeming virtues of those ages; when their place is not supplied by Christian principle, it may well be doubted whether modern civilisation has either left or substituted any thing so good.

When the battle began, the English horsemen could make no impression upon the close circle of their enemies, till they feigned to be disheartened and to fly, and then turned successfully upon the incautious Norwegians, who had been tempted to break their order.

* Antiq. Celto Scand. 209, 210.

Hardrada exerted himself to encourage his people: he was armed in a coat of mail, called after the name of some favourite lady, Emma. It reached half way down the leg, but it seems to have left the neck unprotected, and there he was pierced by an arrow, which instantly killed him. Most of those who fought beside him fell: his banner, however, was borne back to its station; and Tostig succeeded to the command. Harold then sent to offer peace and security both to his brother and to all the Norwegians who were left; but, indignant at the loss of their king, and burning for vengeance, they replied that they would perish to the last man rather than accept of terms from the English. It was, indeed, on their part, a fight of madness and despair. Eysteinn Orri came up at this time from the ships, leading the reinforcement; they had hastened so that they arrived breathless, and almost spent with heat and exertion. But upon hearing of Hardrada's death, as if devoting themselves to revenge and follow him, they made such an attack upon the victorious army, that it was spoken of in after-times by the appellation of Orra-hrid, Orri's tempest. Fatigue, and heat, and madness, made many of them drop their shields, and throw off their breastplates; and some of those who did not thus expose themselves to the well-armed enemy, fell and died of exhaustion without a wound. The greater part of the Norwegians perished, and all their chiefs. Tostig was among the slain. Hardrada's son Olaf had been left at the ships, and thither they who left the field endeavoured to seek shelter. The conquerors pursued to complete their victory; but one brave Norwegian, like Horatius Cocles in the romantic history of Rome, took his post upon a bridge, and singly, by his great strength and prodigious exertions, impeded the pursuit, till one who was more astute than generous, and perhaps than brave, got under the bridge, and thrust a spear into him under his coat of mail. The passage being then no longer defended, the fugitives and the fleet were at Harold's mercy, but he spared them; and Olaf and the

bishop, who was in the expedition, and one of the Orkney earls, upon swearing that they would for ever maintain faith and friendship to this land, were allowed to depart with all the survivors in twenty-four ships.* That day's tragedy produced a salutary effect upon the heart of Olaf†; and the Norwegians enjoyed five and twenty years of tranquil prosperity under his peaceful and beneficent reign.

It is said that no bloodier battle had ever before been fought on English ground; certainly never was one more bravely contested. But, decisive as the victory was, Harold obtained by it only a short respite from his fate: for only three days after the defeat and death of Hardrada and Tostig, William of Normandy landed on the coast of Sussex to claim the crown, with the pretext of a lawful title, and, to enforce that title, at the head of a formidable army.

Of all the northern hosts who established themselves in other countries by conquest, those who gave their name to Normandy are they who most rapidly advanced in civilisation. They seem immediately to have grafted themselves upon the old Romano-Gallic stock, and adopting the language of the people whom they subdued, thus to have qualified their children, in the first generation, for receiving the religion, manners, and arts of Christendom. They seem also, like the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, who fixed themselves in Britain, to have disregarded maritime concerns when they had won a country for themselves. When William resolved upon claiming the English crown, by virtue of Edward the Confessor's testament, the ships for transporting his army were to be built. His chiefs were far from unanimous in advising him to the adventure; but, when his resolution had been taken, both they and the clergy contributed largely to the outfit,

* Antiq. Celto-Scand. 212—216. Sax. Chron. 261, 262.

† Hardrada's daughter died in the Orkneys, on the day of the battle in which her betrothed husband fell. Two sons of Tostig were taken to Norway by Olaf, where they were honourably educated, and lived in strict friendship with the king. They became eminent and excellent men, and both left a flourishing posterity.

supplying money toward the cost, and liquor for the workmen. The number of ships has been variously stated, from 696 to 3000; the latter number, as including the smaller barks, would not be too great for the largest fleet of which any memory in those times was preserved; and that the ships were generally of no considerable burthen may be inferred from the unquestionable authority of the Bayeux tapestry, where the process of ship-building is represented, and men are seen drawing them to the sea by ropes. This most curious relic of antiquity, which is still preserved, is believed to have been the work of William's queen, Mathilda, and her women. That queen presented her husband with the ship in which he was to lead the van, and which was distinguished by its splendid decorations in the day, and in the darkness by the light at its topmast. Its vanes were gilded; its sails were crimson; and at its head was the figure of a child, armed with a bow and arrow, and ready to let fly. In the same ship the white banner was hoisted which pope Alexander II. had consecrated and blessed for the expedition. By engaging to make the English once more acknowledge that authority in the church of Rome which Harold, like all the more vigorous of his predecessors, was little disposed to regard; and by promising that the annual tribute of St. Peter's pence should duly be collected and paid, William's able agents had induced the pope to pronounce a sentence in favour of William's title, .. acting thus as supreme judge, though Harold neither recognised in him any right to decide, nor conferred it by referring the matter to his decision. With the banner the pope sent him a bull, not more in furtherance of William's views, than of the papal policy; and one of St. Peter's hairs, set in a precious ring. The confirmation of his title, which William thought it expedient to obtain, would be of no little weight in disposing the English clergy to acknowledge it; and the nation, in consequence, to submit to him as their lawful king. But he knew the temper and the ability of his op-

ponent, and, therefore, omitted no exertions for drawing succours from far and near. *Adventurers came at his invitation from Britany and from Poitou, from Maine and Anjou, from Aquitaine, from Piedmont, from Burgundy, and from the banks of the Rhine. His father-in-law, Baldwin, earl of Flanders, aided him largely with men, ships, and stores; and though the French king, Philip I., refused him any assistance, he made no attempt to impede the expedition, and allowed as many of his subjects as were so disposed to join it; probably he expected that a formidable neighbour might either be engaged at a distance during the remainder of his life by the success of the expedition, or weakened by its failure.* Another motive, undoubtedly, for which the neighbouring princes encouraged William in his attempt, was, that their own states might be relieved by it from the growth of that restless and turbulent class whose only occupation was war, and who had to make their fortunes by the sword.†

The fleet assembled in the month of August, at the mouth of the river Dive, which enters the sea between the Seine and the Orne. The wind was adverse, and continued so for a whole month; but by this delay, unfavourable as it seemed, the success of the enterprise was materially promoted. For Harold had stationed his fleet off the Isle of Wight, to watch the southern shores, and had encamped an army near. This guard was vigilantly kept during the whole summer; but, in September, their provisions were exhausted, and the ships dispersed in consequence. The coast was thus left unguarded, and at the same time the land force was called off to oppose the Norwegian invasion. At this favourable juncture the wind came

* "Although in these advancements and turns of princes," says Daniel, "there is a concurrency of dispositions, and a state of times prepared for it, yet is it strange, that so many mighty men of the French nation would adventure their lives and fortunes to add England to Normandy to make it more than France, and so great a crown to a duke, who was too great for them already. But where mutations are destined, the counsels of men must be corrupted, and there will fall out all advantages to serve that business." p. 35.

† Turner, ii. 563—565. Palgrave, 365—369. Thierry, Hist. de la Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands, i. 279—289.

round to the southward, and carried the fleet to St. Valery, near Dieppe, the nearest port between Normandy and England; but then the weather changed. It became necessary to cast anchor and wait there for several days, and during that time a gale came on, and several ships were lost with all their crews. The hope with which men engage in such expeditions sickens when it is long deferred; and though William sought to conceal the extent of the disaster from his men, or at least to remove all vestiges of it, by causing the bodies of the shipwrecked to be privately buried as soon as they were found; and though he endeavoured to keep his people in heart by increasing their rations both of food and of cheering liquor; there were many who abandoned the enterprise, and more who began to think that Providence had declared against it. That man was mad, they said, who sought to take possession of another's country. God was displeased at such designs, and manifested his displeasure now by withholding the wind they wanted. But William had spiritual counsellors at hand, who knew as well how to encourage men under such circumstances, as he himself did in the day of battle. By their advice the body of St. Valery, the patron of that place, where a town had grown over his cell, was taken from his shrine, and carried in procession through the camp, the soldiers devoutly kneeling as it passed, and praying for his intercession. In the ensuing night the wind again veered, and to the great glory of St. Valery, blew fair for England.

No time was then lost; they embarked with all speed, and, to ensure order when they should reach the hostile coast, William enjoined all the ships to anchor round his at night, and not recommence their way till the beacon on his topmast should be lighted as a signal, and the trumpet blow. Yet, leading the van himself, he outsailed the whole fleet, as if in his impatience forgetful at the time of his own instructions; and when night closed not a vessel was in sight. In the morning nothing was to be seen from the mast but sea and sky.

He then anchored, and had a sumptuous breakfast served, with spiced wines, that his crew, by good cheer, might be kept in good heart. The second time the sailor went aloft he descried four ships in the distance; and on mounting again he exclaimed, "I see a forest of masts!" They landed, without opposition, on the 28th of September, between Pevensey and Hastings, at a place called Bulverhithe. William occupied the Roman castle at Pevensey; erected three wooden forts, the materials of which he had brought with him ready for construction; threw up works to protect part of his fleet, and burnt, it is said, the rest, or otherwise rendered them unserviceable. Harold was at York, sitting at dinner, and still rejoicing over his recent victory, when the messenger arrived with the news of William's landing. He lost no time in repairing to London; but he is said to have lost many of his best soldiers by taking to himself the whole spoil of Hardrada's army, instead of dividing it among them. For this he has been hastily censured, as if an ill-timed and unwonted covetousness had been his motive: he may have acted unwisely, but not in this spirit. The men who deserted him in disgust were his own subjects, on whose service he relied, because both by duty and by their common interest they were bound to serve him; his mercenaries remained faithful, and as they could only have been rendered so by the pay for which they served, it may fairly be inferred that all spoils were in part immediately appropriated, and in part reserved, for their payment. When he reached London he manned seven hundred ships, and sent them round to hinder William's escape; for this also he has been censured, as weakening thereby his land forces by so large a draught from them. But Harold had no distrust either of his own or of the nation's strength, and looking for a second victory, he had determined that it should be as decisive as the first. The contest indeed was brought to as speedy a termination, and as decisive, but with far

other issue than the Anglo-Saxon king had, in the pride of his heart, anticipated.*

The battle of Hastings belongs not to the subject of this work. "Then," says Daniel, "was tried, by the great assize of God's judgement in battle, the right of power between the English and Norman nations; a battle, the most memorable of all others, and howsoever miserably lost, yet most nobly fought on the part of England." But it should ever be the proper object of an historian to show both how evil in its just consequences produces evil, and how all-wise Providence eventually educes good from it. The Norman conquest is the most momentous event in English history, perhaps the most momentous in the middle ages. So severe a chastisement was never, except in the case of the Wisigoths, inflicted upon any nation, which was not destroyed by it.

One of the exhortations which William addressed to his men before the battle was, that they should take vengeance for the massacre of the Danes, their kinsmen. More than threescore years had elapsed since the perpetration of that great national crime: the Danes themselves had taken speedy and signal vengeance for their murdered countrymen; and they had subsequently, by the effects of conquest, compact, and intermarriages, become one people with the Anglo-Saxons, to whom they were as nearly allied in race as to the Normans, and with whom they had always been connected by the bond of language; whereas the Normans had rejected the speech of the country from whence they still derived their name. In William's mouth, therefore, this was a mere pretext; he would not have advanced it if, instead of contending with the conqueror of Hardrada, his contest had been with the Norwegians. In that case he would probably have presented himself to the southern Anglo-Saxons as their avenger and deliverer. But, in using it against Harold, he no doubt appealed to a prevalent feeling among the various people of

* Turner, i. 574—584. Palgrave, 369. 378. Thierry, i. 289—292.

whom his army was composed, . . a feeling that the reproach and the burden of a national crime lay upon the Anglo-Saxons; for there had been no manifestation, no visible sign of national repentance. The government which, as a government, . . the nation which, as a nation, had inherited this unatoned offence, were to be, the one for ever overthrown, the other subjugated, oppressed, and finally, by a slow and severe process, regenerated. But this was not all. During the intervening years between the massacre and the conquest, the state of manners had been greatly corrupted. The Danes who settled in England had brought a fresh infusion of barbarous manners and barbarous vices to a people who, like all others, were more apt to retrograde towards barbarism than to advance in civilisation; and the nation had never been so thoroughly depraved as at this time, when it was punished for its sins by a foreign conquest. Pride and sensuality had hardened the hearts of the great. The means for supplying their riotous expenditure were procured either by rapine or by the sale of their servile vassals, and of those who, either by the law of war or by lawless violence, were in their power. The mother of earl Godwin was a regular dealer in slaves, buying and selling them, and selecting assortments of beautiful girls for exportation to Denmark. This woman was struck dead by lightning, and her death was regarded * as an infliction of Divine vengeance: not that the traffic itself excited any sense of iniquity; it had become too common for this, apart from any consideration of its origin as a mitigation of barbarous warfare; but the peculiar branch in which she had become notorious occasioned indignation when carried on by one of her sex and station. In those ages parents exposed their children for sale in the market-place like cattle. Revolting as this is to human nature, we may be consoled by believing that it was the poverty of the parents in most cases that consented, not the will; for it is less painful to contemplate distress than de-

* Thierry, 320.

pravity; and we may be humbled by the certainty that the condition of the children thus consigned to bondage was far, far happier than that of those who, in our own days, are .. not sold indeed, .. but bound to a chimney sweeper or a cotton mill. One yet more odious feature belongs to the slave trade of the Anglo-Saxons; their chiefs are charged with selling for prostitution, when they were tired of them, the women whom, by an abuse of legal power, they had made their concubines; and of selling at the same time their own unborn offspring. With the utter pravity which such impieties indicate, impiety of another kind kept pace. Our great and good and glorious Alfred had raised up a learned clergy in his dominions, of whose scriptural belief and scriptural labours there are proofs still extant. That belief had been corrupted, by the system of fraudulent superstition which Dunstan and his associates had superinduced. Amid the general dissolution of manners learning was almost extinguished; while heathen practices, continually revived by the influx of semi-pagans from the Baltic, obtained among the people. The outward observances of Christianity were performed by the nobles with an insolent irreverence, which evinced but too surely how entirely the spirit was wanting. We know that this depravity was not universal, because there are some always in all ages whom their own happy nature, with the assistance of God's grace, preserves from the contagion of surrounding wickedness. Were it not for these, who are the salt of the earth, the whole human race would be swept away, as at the deluge. But it was general enough to be national, and to deserve and draw on at last a national judgment. That judgment, severe as it was, was dispensed in mercy. A race of conquerors was introduced, who, though not less ferocious than the former masters of the land, possessed in an eminent degree the generous qualities and heroic virtues which are connected with the martial spirit when a sense of honour ennobles it. They had wider views of policy, and they were pro-

gressive in civilisation. By the time that they became one people with those whom they had subdued, the language of the whole nation had been changed by gradual interfusion, and that change has, even more than our insular situation, contributed to make the English a peculiar people. But, though the Anglo-Saxon throne was subverted, the nation conquered, the name lost, and the language fused into a composite speech, the line of Alfred was restored, his spirit still survives in his institutions, and the navy which he founded is still the pride and the strength of England.

CHAP. III.

FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO THE ACCESSION OF KING JOHN.

A.D. 1066—1199.

By one hard-fought and decisive battle William obtained the throne; the legitimate heir, Edgar Atheling, though popular both for his descent and his personal qualities in other respects, had been previously set aside for want of the ability and vigour of character necessary in such times; and as the conqueror's claim to the crown was quite as valid as that of the slain king, the chiefs, seeing no present means of resistance, and having no alternative, invited him to accept the crown which he had won. Any national struggle was not to be apprehended, and by a system of policy as efficient as it was remorseless, he was prepared to prevent or punish partial insurrections. But danger might still be expected from Norway, in revenge for Hardrada's death; from Denmark, in support of its own right of conquest; and from the sons of Harold, who had carried off the greater part of the English naval force. William had no fleet wherewith to guard against their invasions; the ships which his allies and associates had supplied, had returned to their own ports as soon as their service was

performed; and those which he had built for the passage had not been constructed for other service, so that if they were destroyed upon his landing, he made little sacrifice in destroying them.

A.D. 1067.

Godwin and Edmund, the sons of Harold, had fled to Ireland after their father's fall; they returned from thence in the ensuing year with threescore sail, ascended the Bristol Channel, and debarking at the mouth of the Avon plundered that fertile country; then made an attack on Bristol, but were bravely resisted and repulsed. With whatever pretext they came, or whatever claim of right they might advance, they acted as common enemies; insomuch, that when having laden their ships with booty, they made a descent on their return upon the Somersetshire coast, William did not think it necessary to send a Norman force against them, but left them to be opposed by their own countrymen, under Ednoth, who had distinguished himself in their father's service. He gave them battle, and fell; the loss was considerable on either side, but the invaders were so roughly handled, that they took to their ships and made again for Ireland. They returned about the following midsummer, with a fleet of nearly the same force, and landed in the Tavy, expecting, probably, to be joined by the Western Britons, and apparently not knowing that Exeter, where Harold's mother had taken refuge, and where the inhabitants had risen for her sake, had been reduced by a Norman force. Earl Breon, with that force, came suddenly upon them, and defeated them with such slaughter in two battles on the same day, that of those who arrived with more than sixty ships, there escaped scarcely men enough for manning two. So severe a loss deterred the Irish from affording any further assistance to the sons of Harold; and the exiles repaired to Denmark, hoping there to meet with allies more persevering as well as more powerful.*

1068.

* Sax. Chron. 267—270. William of Malmesbury, 328. Turner's Middle Ages of England, i. 98. Campbell, i. 77.

Norway had sent forth so large a proportion of its strength in Hardrada's fatal expedition, that it was in no condition to repeat the effort. Harold had bound the son of that king by an oath to maintain faith and friendship towards England for evermore. That obligation, it might be thought, was annulled by the Norman conquest, and Olaf could hardly have been bound by any scruple on that score from assisting the sons of Harold in their attempts against the Norman conqueror; but he had obtained the name of *Kyrri*, that is to say, the quiet, for his peaceful temper, which, happily for himself and his people, suited the circumstances wherein he was placed. It was otherwise with Denmark; that kingdom had lost none of its strength, nor abated any of its pretensions, and its king, Svend Estridsen, believed that the right of inheritance to the crown of England* had vested in him upon Edward's death, though Harold had intruded by fraud, and the duke of Normandy afterwards by force. His claim was likely to meet with support from the Anglo-Danish part of the people, and, indeed, from the whole nation, who from habits of old licence had passed under so severe an order, that it might well be called oppressive; and William engaged Adelbert, the archbishop of Bremen, to use his endeavours for averting the danger by persuasion, or even by money. The archbishop, it is said, was induced by gifts† to undertake this negotiation. Whether the sort of Dane-gelt, which it was not impolitic thus to offer, was accepted, is not known. Adelbert's intervention was not without some effect, but only for a time. The solicitations of the emigrants were more effectual, and in the third year after the conquest, Svend sent a fleet of two hundred and forty sail to act in conjunction with the king of Scotland and the Northumbrians, who it was known were ready for revolt. His two sons, Harold and Canute, embarked

* Holberg (i. 181.) says, it is remarkable that most of the Danish writers style him king of Denmark, Norway, and England.
† Pontanus, 189.

in the expedition, which was under the command of their uncle Osbern; and Poles, Saxons, and Frisians enlisted in it, tempted by the hope of plunder. They entered the Humber about the middle of August, landed in force, and immediately advanced upon York, wasting, with wonted barbarity, the country as they went. Edgar Atheling, and the exiles who had taken refuge in Scotland, presently joined them.

York was occupied by a Norman garrison under William Malet: they were strong enough to maintain internal peace, but not to encounter a Danish army acting in a popular cause, and with the support of the people. Upon the news of their approach, the archbishop Aldred is said to have died of "very grief and anguish of mind," for the inevitable horrors which he foresaw. Malet distrusted the citizens; and he set fire to the suburb, lest they should take advantage of it to act against him. This precaution proved fatal both to the Normans and the city. A strong wind suddenly rising carried the flames within the walls: the minster, with its famous library, and great part of the city, was consumed. The Normans were driven out by the fire which they had kindled: in this confusion they came unexpectedly upon the enemy, and were attacked, under all the disadvantages of disorder, by a far superior force. Three thousand of them were slain, . . a greater loss than any other which they sustained after the battle of Hastings. Malet and his wife and children were spared for the sake of their ransom; and this mercy would not have been shown toward the Norman chief, unless he had used his own power mercifully. The whole of Northumbria, rejoicing in this event, eagerly threw off the Norman yoke; and, if a severe winter had not set in unusually early, the conquerors would have marched towards London without delay. The Danes wintered between the Ouse and the Trent. With the earliest spring William was in the field. On the first tidings of the revolt, he had sworn a dreadful oath that he would lay Northumbria waste, and extirpate its in-

A.D. 1070.

habitants. One part of that oath was observed with atrocious fidelity; and if the other was not in like manner literally performed, it was for no want of wicked will in the oppressor. Marching first to the confluence of the Trent and the Ouse, he there pitched his camp, and, in the only attempt which was made to meet him in the field, directed his efforts more against the Northumbrians than the Danes. The issue was, that the former were routed with great slaughter, Edgar Atheling and a few of his companions flying again into Scotland; and that the latter retreated among the marshes of Lindsey, where they could not be attacked, and from whence they had, at any time, the means of removal in their ships; for William had no naval force with which to intercept their retreat. He treated, therefore, with Osbern; gratified his cupidity with a large sum of money, in addition to the spoils* wherewith his fleet was laden, and permitted, or rather invited, him to plunder the northern sea-coast, on his way back to Denmark. Thus, in ridding himself of these enemies, William made them instrumental to his own purposes of vengeance. While the Danes devastated the whole seaboard, his army laid the interior of the province waste with fire and sword. Not a single habitation, it is said, was left between York and Durham; and that whole tract of country, which had been full of towns and cultivated fields, remained desolate for a century afterwards. Above an hundred thousand persons are said to have suffered in this indiscriminating havoc, which, more than any other of the conqueror's actions, has fixed upon his great name an indelible reproach.†

The Danish fleet suffered so much from storms on its return that but little of the plunder reached Denmark;

* Among these were the treasures of Peterborough minster, for to this expedition no doubt the account in the Saxon Chronicle relates (pp. 273—275.). The author of this portion, who, in Mr. English's careful dissection of this Chronicle, is supposed to have been Hugo Candidus, is mistaken in saying that Svend was with the Danes in person. Campbell (i. 76.) represents it as a second invasion.

† Sax. Chron. 281. Holinshed, ii. 10—12. Pontanus, 189. Holberg, i. 181. Turner, i. 102.

and Svend signified his displeasure at the corrupt and faithless conduct of the commander by banishing him. He assembled a second fleet for the assistance of his confederates, who, in the fastnesses of the fens, maintained a fierce independence. But William, seeing the necessity of providing a maritime force, had, by that time, collected ships; and when Svend's son Canute came with two hundred sail, he could neither relieve his brave but unfortunate allies nor venture to land, though he entered the mouth of the Thames. No farther invasion was attempted till after the death of Svend, and of Harold his son and successor. Canute, known afterwards by the appellations of Saint and King, resumed the intention, stung to it, as it seemed, by the remembrance of his former failure and of his forefathers' exploits.* For this purpose he had an interview with the Norwegian king, Olaf the Quiet, upon the river Gotalf, or Gotha-Elf, near Kouungahella (or Konghell), which was then the capital of Norway. Canute represented that they both had hereditary wrongs to revenge upon England; and he proposed that Olaf should either take the command of an armament, to which Denmark would contribute sixty ships, or send the same number to his aid, if he preferred leaving the command to him. Olaf replied, that he was not wanting in inclination for such an enterprise, but that Norway had exhausted her strength in Hardrada's fatal expedition. She could no longer raise such an army; nor was he himself such a leader as his father had been, . . but conscious of his own inferiority, and of his incapacity for so weighty a command. Denmark might, with more confidence, rely upon the good fortune which had attended its wars with England. He, therefore, would supply the appointed proportion of ships, and leave the command and the glory to Canute. Norway accordingly supplied threescore large ships, well manned

A.D. 1080.

* "Nec enim contentus initia imperii sui orientalibus illustrasse victoriis, etiam Angliam, infelicitate amissam, hæreditario jure repetendam existimavit. Recolebat nimirum bellicam majorum gloriam, cumque opibus imperii fines, longe ex insulæ unius titulis, quàm ex omnibus orientis spoliis exstitisse illustriores latiusque propagatos." — *Pontanus*, 197.

and stored; and Canute's father-in-law, Robert le Frison, earl of Flanders, who took an eager interest in the expedition, engaged to join it with six hundred, the greater part, no doubt, of far inferior burden. The united armament would have amounted to a thousand sail. The Liimfiord was the place of rendezvous for the Norwegian and Danish fleets: the entrance to that deep inland gulf was then navigable for great ships, though, in later times, it has been impeded by an accumulation of sand. All was ready, and the day for sailing appointed, when Canute discovered that his brother Olaf, governor of Sleswic, who was to have accompanied him, had secretly withdrawn to his government, meaning to take advantage of his absence and seize the throne. He was apprehended and sent in chains to Flanders, there to be kept in safe prison by the earl; but the disaffection which he had excited broke up the expedition. His partisans reported, that, because of the delay thus occasioned, the provisions for the voyage would be found insufficient; and desertion, in consequence, took place to such an extent, that Canute was left with only the Norwegian fleet. This he, of necessity, dismissed, sending large presents to the king, and granting to the Norwegians the freedom of all his marts and ports in reward for their fidelity. And thus the last invasion was frustrated with which England was threatened by those enemies who, during three centuries, had been its scourge.*

The bruit of this intended expedition kept William in a state of anxious preparation for some two years, and brought fresh burdens upon his unfortunate subjects. He revived the danegelt upon this occasion; and, because many lands which had been charged with it under the Anglo-Saxon kings were exempted from this tax when he granted them to his nobles, he compensated the deficiency by raising it upon the others to six

* Snorre, Antiq. Celto Scand. 226—228. Pontanus, 197, 198. Holberg, i. 188, 189.

shillings a hide.* He did not, however, revive it as an annual supply; but regarded it, as originally intended, as an impost to be levied upon extraordinary occasions. In the first year of his reign he could trust the English .. even those who had been most attached to Harold .. so well, as to employ them in defending him against the first invaders; but after resentment, distrust, and anger had caused him to rule over them,.. not as a king who regarded their welfare as his own, but as a conqueror who, for his own security, must break their spirits to the yoke,..it was only upon the Normans that he could rely, and upon the mercenaries, whom, on this occasion, he collected from all countries on this side the Alps. They were mostly foot soldiers and archers; and it was, indeed, chiefly by archers that the battle of Hastings had been won, the bow not having been used in war † by the Anglo-Saxons or Danes. So many were now brought over, that their numbers oppressed the kingdom; for he quartered them throughout the country, to be paid as well as supported. ‡ Men, says the Saxon annalist, wondered that the land could feed all that force. One of the bands which he engaged at this time belonged to Hugues, brother to the king of France; for when the common interest of all nations, aided by the influence of Christianity, had put an end to the sea kings and the system of sea-roving, the same class of men who had formerly been so disposed of employed themselves now in the land service, little regarding whom they served, or in what cause. Still further to guard against the apprehended invasion, he ordered the land about the sea coast to be laid waste, that if the Danes landed they might find no ready supply of food. §

The conqueror had felt the want of a naval force; and, knowing that it could only be supported by commerce, he invited foreigners to frequent his ports ||, and

* Lyttelton, iii. 69, 70.

† Holinshed, ii. 26. "As John Rous testifieth." Hardrada, however, had archers with him, and was killed by an arrow.

‡ William of Malmesbury, 336. Holinshed, ii. 23.

§ Sax. Chron. 288.

|| Henry, iii. 502.

promised that they and their property should be perfectly secure. His successor had recourse to a readier means for raising ships. When his elder brother was preparing an armament in Normandy, for the purpose of asserting his right to the English crown, the Red King permitted his subjects to fit out cruisers; and these adventurers, who seem to have been the first that may be called privateers, rendered him good service; for the Normans, knowing that there was no navy to oppose them, and that when they landed they were more likely to be received by their friends and confederates than to be attacked before they were collected in sufficient numbers for defence, began to cross the Channel, each at their own convenience, without concert, or any regard to mutual support; and so many of them were intercepted and destroyed by these cruisers, that the attempt at invasion was, in consequence, abandoned.* The remainder of Rufus's reign, short as it was, sufficed, through his own vigorous policy and the carelessness of his antagonist, for him to acquire a superiority at sea, which enabled him, at any time, to invade Normandy.

Once when he was hunting, a messenger from beyond sea brought him news that the city of Mans, which he had added to his dominions, was besieged. He instantly turned his horse, and set off for the nearest port. The nobles who were in his company reminded him that it was necessary to call out troops, and wait for them. "I shall see who will follow me," was his reply; "and, if I understand the temper of the youth of this kingdom, I shall have people enough." Waiting for nothing, he reached the port almost unattended, and embarked immediately, although it blew a storm. The sailors entreated him to have patience till the weather should abate, and the wind become more favourable. But he made answer, "I never heard of a king that was shipwrecked. Weigh anchor, and you will see that the

* I follow Dr. Campbell's statement in this (i. 81, 82.), though I have not happened to meet with his authorities.

winds will be with us!" He has been extolled for this act of characteristic impatience and resolution, because the event happened to be fortunate: celerity was of great importance; and the news of his landing, as it was concluded that he came in force, sufficed for raising the siege.* It was not in him a bravado in imitation of Cæsar: that well-known story was known to very few in those ages, .. the Red King had neither inclination nor leisure for learning; and it was even more in character with him than with Cæsar, the act itself being of more daring and less reasonable hardihood. On the other hand, he has been condemned, and with more justice, as manifesting here a spirit of audacious impiety, for which, among his other vices, he was peculiarly noted; and there are writers who, falling into an opposite extreme, have presumed to say that this special sin was visited by a special judgment upon the person of his nephew, prince Henry, .. the pride and hope of his father, and, indeed, of the English nation, who saw in him the representative, by his mother's side, of the old Anglo-Saxon line. William's bravado would, no doubt, be remembered after that catastrophe with poignant feelings by the bereaved father; but Henry Beauclerc had in his own conscience an unerring witness that his own sins of ambition had too surely deserved such a chastisement. The shipwreck of this young prince is the next event in the maritime history of England. Many shipwrecks have been attended with far greater loss of lives, and with far more dreadful circumstances; but none can ever have produced so general an emotion in this country, nor has any single event ever been the occasion here of so much national suffering, as this, which opened the way for Stephen's usurpation.

After a successful campaign in France, happily concluded through the pope's mediation by a peace, Henry embarked from Barfleur for England, with this his only legitimate son, then recently married, and in his seventeenth year. One of the finest vessels in the fleet was a

A.D. 1120.

* William of Malmesbury, 390.

galley of fifty oars, called "The White Ship," and commanded by a certain Thomas Fitzstephens, whose grandfather had carried over the Conqueror when he invaded the kingdom which he won. Upon this ground Fitzstephens solicited the honour of now conveying the king, upon an occasion as much more joyful as it was less momentous. Henry was pleased with a request preferred for such a motive; and, though having chosen a vessel for himself, he did not think proper to alter his own arrangements, he left prince William, with the rest of his family, and their friends and attendants, to take their passage in the White Ship; and embarking towards evening on the 25th of November, in fair weather, he sailed for England. There were with the prince his natural brother Richard, and their sister the lady Marie* countess of Perch, Richard earl of Chester with his wife, who was the king's niece, and her brother the prince's governor, and the flower of the young nobility both of Normandy† and England, 140 in number, eighteen being women of the first rank: these and their retinues amounting, with the crew, to about 300 persons. The prince, being detained a little after his father, imprudently ordered three casks of wine to be distributed among the men; and the captain, as well as the sailors, drank, in the joy of his heart, too freely, and promised to overtake every ship that had sailed before them. Accordingly he hoisted all sail, and plied all oars. The evening had closed before they started, but it was bright moonlight; the men exerted themselves under all the excitement of hilarity and pride and emulation, dreaming of no danger; the captain and the helmsman, under the same excitement, were unmindful of any; and when the ship was going through the water with all the stress of oars and sails, she struck upon a rock, called the *Catte-raze*, with such violence,

* The Countess Notha, Fabyan calls her, apparently mistaking for her real name a word that denotes her illegitimacy.

† "Pene tota propago omnium nobilium Normannorum," are the abbot of Coggeshale's words in his Chronicle. Martene et Durand, Vet. Script. Ampleg. Coll. tom. v. 805.

that several planks were started, and she instantly began to fill. A boat was immediately lowered, and the prince was escaping in it,.. which he might easily have done, for the shore was at no great distance,.. when his sister, whom there had been no time to take off, or who in the horror of the moment had been forgotten, shrieked out to him to save her. It was better to die than turn a deaf ear to that call: he ordered the boat to put back and take her in; but such numbers leapt into it at the same time, that the boat was swamped, and all perished.* The ship also presently went down with all on board: only two persons, the one a young noble, son of Gilbert de Aquila, the other a butcher of Rouen, saved themselves: by climbing the mast, and clinging to the top, they kept their heads above water. Fitzstephens rose after the vessel had sunk, and might have taken the same chance of preservation; but calling to mind, after the first instinctive effort, that he had been the unhappy occasion of this great calamity, and dreading the reproaches, and perhaps the punishment that awaited him, he preferred present death as the least evil. The youth became exhausted during the night; and commending his poor companion to God's mercy with his last words, he lost his hold, and sunk. The butcher held on till morning, when he was seen from the shore and saved; and from him, being the only survivor, the circumstances of the tragedy were learnt. The tidings reached England in the course of that day; but no one would communicate it to the king; no one, not even those who had lost dear connections of their own by the same awful event, could bear to witness the first emotions of his grief. Three days they persisted in thus

* "Which sudden clap of God's judgment, coming in a calm of glory, when all these bustlings seemed past over, might make a conscience shrink with terror, to see oppression and supplantation repaid with the extinction of that for which so much had been wrought; and the line masculine of Normandy expired in the third inheritor, as if to begin the fate laid on all the future succession hitherunto, wherein the third heir in a right descent seldom or never enjoyed the crown of England; but that, either by usurpation or extinction of the male blood, it received an alteration: which may teach princes to observe the ways of righteousness, and let men alone with their rights, and God with his providence." —*Daniel*, 65.

concealing it, till the king's anxiety being at length well nigh as painful as the certainty could be, a little boy was then sent in, who weeping bitterly, with no counterfeited passion, fell at his feet, and told him, that the White Ship, with all on board, was lost. The king, strong as he was in body and in mind, and in heart also, fainted at the shock; and though he survived it many years, he was never afterwards seen to smile.*

It had been the custom of England till this king's reign, that when a vessel was wrecked on the coast, both ship and cargo became the property of the lord of the manor, unless they who escaped from it appeared within a limited time. The usage was probably more barbarous than the law that licensed it; and it was mitigated by a decree of Henry's, that if one man escaped alive the lord should have no claim.† But even in far later and more civilised ages it has not been found easy to suppress the practice of wrecking ‡ among men who impiously persuade themselves that they exercise in it a natural right. During Stephen's turbulent usurpation the decree was disregarded, and the men who escaped from shipwreck found their fellow-creatures as merciless as the elements. Henry II. therefore revived his grandfather's law; and enacted also, that even if no person survived the wreck, but any live animal escaped from it, or was found alive on board, the ship and cargo should be kept for the owners, if they appeared within three months.§ A jealous regard for the maritime strength of the nation was manifested by the same king, in his injunction to the justices itinerant, that in every county they should

A.D. 1174.

1181.

* William of Malmesbury, 518. Holinshed, ii. 70. Lyttelton, Henry II. (8vo.) i. 198. Henry, iii. 48—50. Turner, i. 188—191.

† Campbell, i. 88. Henry, iii. 503.

‡ So late as the last years of George II.'s reign, lord Lyttelton says, "I am very sorry to observe, that notwithstanding this law, made so many ages ago, and other statutes enacted since, with a view to restrain this most inhuman barbarity, it still remains a foul reproach and disgrace to our nation." Methodism has since done much towards putting an end to it in that part of the country which was most infamous for this practice. But I am sorry to say, that in a most mournful instance, which is fresh in my own memory, boats hovered about a wreck to pick up the spoils, and left the sufferers to perish.

§ Henry, iii. 504.

strictly prohibit any one, as he valued life and fortune, from buying or selling any ship to be carried out of England, or from sending or causing to be sent any mariner into a foreign service.*

Piracy and commerce had grown up together in the northern seas, as among the Phœnicians and Greeks in ancient times. Or, perhaps, commerce may more properly be said to have originated from piracy, the civilising consequence of a barbarous cause. They flourished together; and, after piracy had been forbidden by the kings of the North (for this was one of the first beneficent effects of Christianity), the pagan and piratical state of Julin, or Jomsberg (the Algiers of the Baltic), which about this time was conquered by the Danish king Waldemar the Great, was one of the largest cities in Europe, and, Constantinople alone excepted, the most frequented port.† But as maritime commerce had been produced by piracy, so was it both directly and incidentally rendered honourable by the same cause; directly, when carried on by the proud sea-rovers themselves, who gloried in the display and disposal of their spoils; incidentally, because they who would otherwise have been peaceable traders, were compelled to sail in armed vessels for their own security; and thus they obtained, in public opinion, a degree of consideration which would not have been conceded in those days to mere wealth, nor to the humble pursuit of gain. The Anglo-Saxon laws conferred rank upon the merchants who thus traversed the seas in defiance of all enemies; but the Normans looked at them only in their mercantile capacity; and there is a curious passage in the history of the Conqueror, by his chaplain, William of Poictou ‡, which indicates both the extent of their dealings and the contempt with which not only the soldiers but the chaplain himself regarded them. "The English merchants," said he, "add to the opu-

* Henry, iii. 504.

† Turner, i. 37. Holberg, i. 236. The different nations who bordered upon the Baltic had their respective quarters in the town.

‡ Quoted in Henry, iii. 484.

lence of their country, rich in its own fertility, still greater riches and more valuable treasures by importation. These imported treasures, which were considerable both for their quantity and quality, were either to have been hoarded up for the gratification of their avarice, or to have been dissipated for the indulgence of their luxurious inclinations. But William seized them, and bestowed part on his victorious army, part on churches and monasteries, and to the pope and the church of Rome he sent an incredible mass of money in gold, silver, and many ornaments that would have been admired even at Constantinople."

The ruin which was thus brought upon the great merchants afforded an opening to the Jews; and so many of that nation came from other countries to avail themselves of the inviting opportunity, that their settlement in England is commonly referred to the time of the Norman conquest, and the Conqueror is said to have introduced them *; but there is legal proof that Jews were settled in this island long before, and the strongest probability that they existed here in the time of the Romans. The great services which, in their pursuit of gain, this most unfortunate and persecuted people rendered to civilisation, to science, and to literature, has scarcely yet been acknowledged with sufficient gratitude. By their agency it was that the Sabæans imported into London the frankincense and the spices of Arabia; that palm-oil was brought from what was then the rich country about Babylon; and silks, and gold, and precious stones from the East.† The political connection between England and Normandy gave another impulse to maritime trade, by the necessity which it created for shipping, and the constant intercourse between the two countries. But nothing contributed so much to the growing strength and prosperity of the nation as the five-and-thirty years of tranquillity which it enjoyed under the vigilant and firm government of Henry I. Foreigners, who were

* Anglia Judaica, ii. 4. † Henry, iii. 496.

driven from their own countries by the deadly feuds and barbarous warfare which every where else afflicted society, came to England as the only haven of security.* Merchants of all nations frequented London; the greater number seem to have been from Germany; and when our own harvests failed, the rest of the kingdom is said to have been supplied with corn from the metropolis.† At other times corn was exported from thence by licences, for which a fine was paid to the king.‡ Bristol carried on a flourishing trade with Ireland, whither it carried slaves, bred or bought for the market; with Norway and the Baltic, from whence it brought furs, then an article of clothing for all who could afford to purchase them; and with other countries. English and French merchants had settled in some of the Irish ports, and were introducing, among a most barbarous people, such civilisation as is promoted by trade. They had cause to complain of their treatment by king Murtard O'Brien; but that cause was presently removed §, upon Henry's threatening to prohibit all commerce with that island. Ships from Ireland and from Germany sailed up the Ouse ‖ into the very heart of York city, where the Jews were then flourishing; they flourished also at Lincoln, then one of the most populous cities in the kingdom, and a mart for all goods coming by land and water; and it was probably through their representations that Henry I. connected the Witham and the Trent by a navigable canal, now called the Foss Dyke, whereby Lincoln was enabled to carry on a foreign trade.¶ "O England!" exclaims Matthew of Westminster, referring to this age, "thou wert lately equal to the ancient Chaldeans in power, prosperity, and glory. The ships of Tharshish could not be com-

A.D. 1121.

* William of Malmesbury, 505. 582. † Campbell, i. 92.
‡ Henry, iii. 494.
§ "For of what value," says Malmesbury, "could Ireland be, if deprived of the merchandise of England. From poverty, or rather from the ignorance of the cultivators, the soil, unproductive of every good, engenders without the cities a rustic filthy swarm of natives; but the English and French inhabit the cities in a greater degree of civilisation, through their mercantile traffic," p. 504.
‖ Hen. iii. 490. ¶ Ibid. Camden, 467, 468.

parel with thy ships, which brought thee spices and every precious thing from the four corners of the world. The sea was to thee an impregnable wall; and thy ports on all sides as the well fortified gates of a strong castle!"

But this prosperity had no root in the manners and morals of the nation; and England, which, under Henry Beauclerc, had been the happiest country in Europe, because the most peaceful, was rendered the most miserable, because all its turbulent subjects, and all its evil passions, were let loose, in consequence of Stephen's usurpation. Instead of colonies of industrious people, like the Flemings, whom Henry had established in Pembrokeshire, Stephen brought over bands of mercenaries for his support; and instead of seeing canals formed for the facility of trade, castles were erected throughout the land as so many strongholds, from whence some powerful freebooter might tyrannise over the helpless inhabitants all around. Danegelt was levied, not, as formerly *, to buy off or to guard against a northern invasion, but because the usurper was threatened by the rightful heiress of the throne. To complete the ruin brought upon commerce by this general anarchy, Stephen debased the money which his predecessor had rigidly maintained at its just standard. He had incurred the guilt of perjury, and of the blood so profusely shed in his quarrel †, for the sake of bequeathing a throne to his posterity; and it pleased God to take from him his only son, the desire of his eyes, a youth universally beloved for his excellent disposition, and removed, mercifully for himself, while he was yet unspotted, from the world.

A.D. 1155. One of Henry II.'s first measures was to expel all those aliens who, during the civil war, had flocked into this country to prey upon the inhabitants; thus he rid the land of the mercenaries, the not less odious race of

* Lyttelton, iii. 71. He had sworn at his coronation that he would forgive the danegelt, as king Henry before him had done." — *Fabyan*, 264.

† I know not what people Malmesbury means by the Vituli; a kind of mariners, he says, (p. 688.) whose dearest connections resided at Southampton; and who, being fidi clientes of Robert of Gloucester, had influence enough with him to save that place from his vengeance.

camp followers *, and those who traded in the spoils of the people. In the early part of his reign, he made no efforts for raising a maritime force; because, having inherited Normany with the English throne, and Anjou and Maine from his father, and possessing the provinces between the Loire and the Pyrenees as the dowry of his wife, he was master of almost the whole French coast; and being in alliance with the earls of Boulogne and Flanders, he was in no fear of invasion. † But it is ill policy to rely so confidently upon the amicable disposition of foreign powers, as not to be provided against the consequences of any change in their policy. The earl of Boulogne claimed, in right of his wife, a great fief which Henry had re-annexed as an escheat to the demesne of the dukes of Normandy. He claimed, also, some revenues in England, as, by the same marriage, belonging to him by ancient right. Both were legal claims, and there were legal grounds for disputing both; but the earl being supported by his brother, the earl of Flanders, resolved to vindicate his right by arms. Accordingly, he prepared to invade England with a fleet of 600 ships. The plan was probably concerted with the kings of France and Scotland, and with the Welsh princes; and as the threat of excommunication was then suspended over Henry by Becket, that also was, no doubt, relied on for the disaffection which it might produce among the people. Henry had formerly thought that the naval force which now not only menaced but seriously endangered him might at any time be engaged in his service, so little safety is there, "in any reliance on a foreign defence, if it produces or encourages a neglect of any necessary part of the national strength." ‡ He was on the continent, at this time, engaged in war with France, and still more seriously

A. D. 1167.

* "It was a world's wonder," says Holinshed, "to see how suddenly these aliens were quite vanished, as though they had been phantasms. Their abiding here was nothing profitable to the subjects of the realm, as they that were accustomed to attempt one shrewd turn upon another's neck, and thought it lawful for them so to do. Among them was a great number of Flemings, whom the king hated more than the residue," iii. 111.

† Lyttelton, iii. 73. Turner, i. 216. ‡ Lyttelton, iv. 169.

embarrassed by his struggle with Becket and the papal power. But the grand justiciary, Richard de Lucy, to whom the guardianship of the realm had been committed during the king's absence, called forth that armed force which, by the law of the land, was always to be in readiness, and he distributed it along the coast in such strength, that the two earls, though they had the command of the sea, did not venture to attempt an invasion. Henry, however, whose judgment was disturbed by no passion in this case, deemed it prudent to compound with the earl of Boulogne, and retain him for a useful friend. He gave him, therefore, in lieu of all claims, an annual pension of 1000*l.*; for which, being considered a benefice, he bound himself to serve the king as a vassal.*

Henry now saw the necessity of attending to his means of maritime defence. His coasts were sometimes infested by Irish pirates, who carried off the inhabitants and sold them.† This was one of his motives for meditating the conquest of Ireland; and when that conquest had been commenced by a set of private adventurers, he was provided with a fleet for following it up. "The chiefest and newest" of his ships was lost in a storm, wherein the king was in great danger, crossing from Normandy to England; and as 400 persons, being the whole who were on board, went down in her, the size of the largest vessels is thus ascertained.‡

Towards the latter part of Henry's reign, the kingdom of Jerusalem was offered to him, with the keys of the city and of the holy sepulchre, by the patriarch of that city; and he was urged, in the pope's name, and for the honour of Christendom, to go in person to the relief of the Holy Land, according to the obligation which he had taken upon himself, as part of his penance for Becket's

* Holinshed, ii. 123. Lyttelton, iv. 167—170. This judicious writer remarks, that such stipulations were, in reality, of much the same purport with the subsidiary treaties of later ages, — a sort of policy of which the kings of England, even those of the highest spirit and most warlike disposition, have continually availed themselves from the earliest times.

† Campbell, i. 99.

‡ Holinshed, ii. 130. Charnock, Hist. of Marine Architecture, i. 362.

death. But if Henry had ever been of a temper to entertain views of romantic ambition, his age for them was then gone by. He referred the matter to an assembly of his clergy, and demanded their opinion, whether, under the circumstances in which he was placed, it was his duty, at that time, to perform the engagement into which he had entered with the Pope. The bishops and abbots, who had been convoked on this occasion, unanimously agreed, not only that he was not bound now to perform it, but that, for the good of his own soul, he would do much better by remaining in his own dominions; that the promise which he had made was dispensable, and ought to be dispensed with; and that it could not be allowed to prejudice that indispensable obligation which at his coronation he had contracted, to govern his subjects well, and to defend them against all enemies, foreign and domestic: this it would be impossible for him to do if he now left the country.* Sanctioned by this solemn opinion, Henry replied to the patriarch, "that he could not leave his dominions to become the prey of the French: let others who might go without injury to their subjects undertake the voyage, and he would contribute to it largely from his means." Upon this the Patriarch replied, "We want a man, and not money. Well nigh every Christian region sendeth us money, but no land sendeth us a prince. Therefore, we ask a prince that needeth money, and not money that needeth a prince." At this time the crusade was preached with such impatient intolerance, that the Welsh prince and poet, Owain Cyvelioc, was excommunicated by archbishop Baldwin, for refusing, at his exhortation, to take the cross. The Patriarch demeaned himself in the same spirit; for when Henry, who, to soften his refusal, had shown him all marks of respect, accompanied him, for farther honour, to the sea-shore, the prelate gave way to such intemperance of anger, as if disappointment had rekindled in him

* Maimbourg, Hist. des Croisades, tom. ii. 57—61. edit. de Holland, quoted by Bayle.

some old feeling of personal animosity. "Hitherto," he is reported to have said, "thou hast reigned gloriously, but hereafter thou shalt be forsaken of Him whom thou now forsakest. Think on Him what He hath given to thee, and what thou hast yielden to Him again! First, thou wert false to the king of France; then thou slewest that holy martyr, Thomas of Canterbury, and now thou forsakest the protection of Christ's faith!" The king was moved, by this insolence, so far as to reply, "Though all the men of my land were one body, and spake with one mouth, they durst not speak to me such words." The audacious bigot made answer, "No wonder; for they love thine and not thee; they love thy goods temporal, and fear thee for the loss of promotion; but they love not thy soul." And having worked himself up to the height of insolent anger, he stretched out his neck towards Henry, and exclaimed, "Do by me right as thou didst by that blessed Thomas of Canterbury! I had liever be slain of thee than of the Saracens, for thou art worse than any Saracen." The king kept his temper, and calmly replied, "I may not leave my dominions, because my own sons would rise against me if I were absent."... "No wonder," retorted the Patriarch; "for of the devil they came, and to the devil they go;" and so, says the chronicler, "he departed in great ire." *

When, however, tidings came that Jerusalem had fallen, and that the holy sepulchre was once more in possession of the misbelievers, Henry, whether from an

* Fabyan, 279, 280. He relates this upon the authority "of Peter Disroye, which made a book in French of the winning and losing of the said city of Jerusalem." I learn from Bayle, that Maimbourg relates the same story. There, too, I learn, that Heraclius was not only, as his conduct in England shows, a most intemperate person, but a man of scandalous life. He lived so openly and ostentatiously at Jerusalem with the widow of a merchant, that she was called the Patriarchess. The patriarch's parting compliment relates to a story which makes the Plantagenets, by the founder of their family, akin to Merlin. "Geraldus Cambrensis," says Fabyan, "descriveth the progeny which I overpass, because it is so common. Richard his son would often tell that wonder; and used to say, No marvel if they grieved the people, *for of the devil they came, and to the devil they shall*," p. 281. But this is as false as the fable itself; for with all Richard's vices, there is good reason to believe that he had a deep sense of religion.

emotion of zeal, or a desire to fly from the perpetual troubles which were raised against him by his children, took the cross; and allowing his subjects, both in England and France, to swear fealty to his son Richard, he prepared for accompanying the king of France to Palestine.* There is no reason to doubt that the intention was real, though he died before it could be carried into effect; and when Richard, so properly called Cœur de Lion, succeeded to the throne, he found the naval preparations far advanced.† Galleys, larger than the ordinary armed ones, were constructed for this expedition, fifty of them being of three rows of oars; and transports were selected from the shipping of all his ports. The Conqueror's fleet had been far more numerous; but for the size and strength of the ships, this was the most formidable armament that had as yet appeared in modern Europe. Richard appointed it to meet him at Marseilles; and, having received the scrip and staff as a pilgrim from the hands of the archbishop of Tours, he joined the French king, Philip Augustus, at Vezelay, and marched amicably with him to Lyons: there the number of their respective hosts made it expedient for them to separate‡; Philip set out for Genoa, Richard toward Marseilles. At Chinon he promulgated some severe and summary laws for the preservation of order in his fleet. If any man killed another on board, he was to be fastened to the dead body, and so thrown into the sea; if the crime were committed on shore, to be bound to the corpse and buried with it. He who drew blood from another by a wilful blow, or struck at him with a weapon, was to lose his hand; a hand-blow that caused no bloodshed was to be punished by ducking the offender thrice. Whoever reviled or cursed another should pay to the offended party an ounce of silver for every offence:.. they could not have been poor adventurers

A.D. 1189.

* Turner, i. 299. † Lyttelton, iii 74.

‡ "The bridge over the Rhone, with press of people, brake, and many, both men and women, were drowned. By reason whereof the two kings, for the cumbrances of their trains, were constrained to dissever themselves for the time of their journey." — *Fox's Acts and Monuments*, i. 274.

for whom such a penalty was appointed. A thief was to be shaven or shorn *, hot pitch . . (the law says boiling) was then to be poured upon his head, and the feathers of a pillow shaken over it, as a mark whereby he might be known; and he was then to be turned ashore on the first land at which the ship might touch. †

Meantime the fleet, which had sailed from Dartmouth, encountered bad weather in crossing the bay: ten ships were separated from the rest. One of them, which was a London vessel, after beating off the coast of Spain and Portugal, doubled Cape St. Vincent, and arrived off Sylves; that place not long before had been taken by the Christians, and was now expecting to be besieged by the Moors, who, in great force, were endeavouring to reconquer the country, of which king Sancho and his father Affonso Henriques had dispossessed them. The ship ‡ had probably suffered so much on the way as to need considerable repairs; otherwise, lax as discipline was in those days, it is not likely that the persons in command should have consented to the proposal of the Portugueze, that they should let the ship be broken up to form barriers with its timbers, and tarry themselves to assist

* "In modum camplonia."

† Rymer, i. 52. Holinshed, ii. 213. A sort of tarring and feathering, in a more refined way, was a fashion among some of the Tupi tribes. (Hist. of Brazil, i. 219. n. 9.) About this time it seems to have been a brutal popular punishment, as in America during the revolutionary war. The Lorrainers, whom the emperor Otho called to his aid against Philip Augustus, on the Rhine, *honeyed* and feathered a nun, set her on a horse, with her face toward the tail, and in that miserable condition led her about for several days. All the ringleaders in this outrage were, by Philip's order, boiled alive. Annales Novesienses, A. D. 1200. Martene et Durand, Vet. Script. Ampliss. Coll. tom. iv. 567.

‡ It was, probably, by the persons who consented to part with this vessel, that the miracle related by Robert of Brunne was invented. One of the ten ships, he says, which belonged to London, suffered much more than any of the others, being "broken and all-to-rent" by the storm. But there were 100 pious men on board, who prayed to St. Thomas of Canterbury, as being a saint of the last creation, and most in vogue. Becket not only came himself, with his crozier and pall, but brought with him king St. Edmund the Martyr, and the bishop St. Nicholas,

> Whose help is aye ready
> To shipmen in alle case, when they on him cry;

he assured the crew, that God and our Lady had instructed him and his two companions to keep company with king Richard's fleet, and take charge of it. It appears however, that for some unknown reason, they did not convoy it farther than the straits of Messina. Hearne's Peter Langtoft, i. 148.

in the defence of the town, upon a promise of being rewarded for their services, and supplied with a vessel as good as their own. Nine others of the fleet put into the Tagus. The king of Portugal was at that time in Santarem, preparing against a threatened attack by the Miramamolin: a chosen body of 500 of these crusaders marched to his aid; and the news of their advance sufficed to make the Moors desist from their intention. The actual force, considering its quality, was not inconsiderable: it was, no doubt, exaggerated by report; and in the age of the crusades, the Moslem knew not but that a far more formidable armament might follow. In fact, when the king, leaving Santarem in safety, returned to Lisbon, he found sixty-three more of Richard's navy newly arrived there, under the commanders named Robert de Saville * and Richard de Camuille. The king came in time; for some of the baser adventurers, who thought that whether the inhabitants were Moors or Christians they were equally foreigners, and the prey the same, had begun to plunder the surrounding country, and to commit disorders in the city itself. Sancho acted with great prudence, seeking rather to restrain the crusaders from farther mischief than to resent what had already been done; and the exertions of the English commanders seemed for a time to have succeeded in restoring order. But within three days the ill blood which had been kindled broke out again: lives were lost on both sides; and the king, with becoming spirit, ordering the gates to be shut, committed all the crusaders who were within the walls to prison. They were about 700 in number, who had gone in not with hostile intentions, but to gratify their curiosity, or to take their pleasure. Both parties, however resentful they might be, saw the expediency of coming to terms: restitution was made on both sides: the English engaged to maintain peace with the king of Portugal and his people, and they to observe it with all the pilgrims

* Sabuuilla.

who were bound for the holy war; and thus the quarrel was composed.*

Soon afterwards the English fleet fell down the Tagus: just upon leaving that river they were joined by three-and-thirty vessels; their whole armament then amounted to 106 sail, well manned and equipped. They arrived at Marseilles without farther delay; but Richard, after waiting there eight days, and becoming impatient of their tarriance, had hired twenty galleys and ten great barks, and proceeded to Genoa. He conferred there once more with the king of France, whom indisposition had detained, and appointing Messina for their rendezvous, whither he had left orders for his fleet to repair, he proceeded along the coast. Gratifying a liberal curiosity as he went, he landed, as opportunity tempted him, visited Pisa, and, by an accident which happened to his ship, was compelled to put into the Tiber. The cardinal-bishop of Ostia came to welcome him there with due ceremony; and did not let the occasion slip of reminding him that the church of Rome had a claim upon the king of England for certain fees due on the election of the bishop of Ely, and the deposition of the bishop of Bourdeaux. But instead of discharging the demand, Cœur de Lion reproached the papal court for its scandalous simony, and specified cases in which those bishops were implicated†; and for this reason, it is said, he refused to visit so polluted a city as

* Holinshed, ii. 214, 215. Turner, i. 366. This account is not to be reconciled with that of the Portugueze authors (Ruy de Pina, Chron del Rey Don Sancho, cap. 8—11. Brandam, Monarquia Lusitana, tom. iv pp. 19. 25.). The Portugueze authority here is not the best; but, probably, both accounts are true, and refer to different expeditions, for there is evidently a confusion of dates. The Portugueze seem to relate the earlier, the English the later circumstances; and that both are in the main true is the more likely, because each relates what (on the whole) is most to the credit of the other nation.

† Baronius, speaking of this interview with the cardinal, says,—"Cui rex turpia multa dixit, improperando Romanis simoniam, quod septingentas marchas debuerint habere pro consecratione episcopi Cenomanensis, et mille et quingentas marchas pro legatione Eliensis episcopi, et pecuniam magnam, ne deponeretur Burdegalensis qui a clericis suis accusabatur in crimine. Hæc de his: quæ si vera sunt, erit profatò, ut laudanda sint tempora nostra, quibus quidquid simoniacum suspicione tantum auditur, procul abjicitur; et aliæ exactiones, aliquâ justâ causâ prætensæ sunt modestiores. *Annales Eccl.* tom. xii. p. 802. Antverpiæ, 1609.

the capital of the Christian world. Landing at Naples he visited the abbey of St. Januarius, for the sake of seeing some dry and shrivelled bodies, which were placed erect there in a cell, as ghastly mementos of mortality. From thence he rode to Salerno, and there awaited tidings of his fleet. The fleet had tarried eight days at Marseilles, to repair such damage as they had sustained: they then sailed for Messina*; and arrived there safely a few days before Philip Augustus, who had lost many of his ships on the way. Richard now hastened from Salerno; and, having reached Mileto, proceeded from thence on horseback with one knight only to accompany him. Passing through a village, he was told that in one of the cottages there was a hawk; and as if the game laws of his own country had empowered him to seize it, he went in with the intention of taking the bird for his own sport along the road. But the peasant resisted this violence: his neighbours took up the quarrel in the man's behalf: they attacked the king with sticks and stones, and one drew his knife upon him. Richard struck this fellow with the flat side of his sword, in humanity or in disdain, not choosing to use the edge, and perhaps conscious that he had given the provocation. The sword broke: he then took up stones in his own defence; but even Cœur de Lion could not, when unarmed, resist a handful of exasperated rustics, and he might have perished here, even more unworthily than in the catastrophe for which, after all his heroic exploits, he was reserved, if there had not been a priory hard by, wherein he took refuge.†

Having escaped from this danger, he passed the en-

* The earliest mention of the flying fish in any of our English writers is, probably, that which occurs in Hoveden's account of this voyage: — "In mari illo circa Sardenam et Corzhege sunt pisces similes siccis, que volant in aera exeuntes a mari. Et cum volaverint quasi per unum stadium, iterum descendunt in mare; et sunt ibi falcones multi volantes post pisces illos, et insequentes ut rapiant ex illis escam sibi. Et qui hoc vidit testimonium perhibuit, et verum est testimonium ejus; quia cum ipse in mensa sedisset, videlicet in alta navi, quidam ex piscibus illis volantibus cecidit ante illum super mensam."

† Holinshed, i. 214. Turner, i. 367. Mills's Hist of the Crusades, ii. 32—34.

suing night in a tent near the Straits of Scylla. His fleet came to receive him; and he entered the noble port of Messina with so great a show of power, and sound of warlike instruments, and other signs of majesty, in the sight of Philip and the French, and of many other nations there assembled, that it struck fear into the inhabitants, saith Hoveden, and moved no small envy in the hearts of his confederates. Whether that feeling was yet kindled in the mind of Philip Augustus, or not, that monarch perceived how likely it was that if they remained together in the same port, where they had no common enemy to occupy their attention, disputes would arise between the two armies, and lead to a difference between the two kings. Wisely, therefore, he embarked as soon as possible, with the intention of pursuing his voyage to Palestine; but contrary winds compelled him to put back, however unwillingly*; and as it was now late in September, the two kings resolved to winter where they were, and supply themselves, meantime, with every thing needful for the service of the expedition.

This was no pleasant determination for the king of Sicily, Tancred, who, though illegitimate, had recently, upon his brother's death, possessed himself of the throne, by favour of the barons, and disregarding the right of the late king's sister. Even if it had been probable that all grounds of dispute could have been obviated between the Sicilians and their uninvited and formidable guests, there was an account to be settled with the king of England, which it was neither convenient to discharge nor easy to evade. Joan, the widow of the late king William the Good, was Cœur de Lion's sister, and Tancred, upon his usurpation, had not only withheld her dower, but imprisoned her. Richard's first business was to require her immediate enlargement; and Tancred accordingly sent galleys to bring her from Palermo to Messina, where she was delivered to her brother. The king of England, on his arrival, had been quartered in a house among the

* "Dolens et invitus Massanam reversu est."—*Hoveden.*

vineyards in the suburbs, Philip having previously been entertained in the palace. He now thought a stronghold necessary for his sister's dignity till her claims should be settled; and, either without attempting more conciliatory measures, or waiting for their result, he crossed the straits, and took possession of Labaniere, on the opposite shore.* There he established her with a sufficient force for her protection; and, returning to Messina, expelled the monks from a large monastery, either in an island, or on the shore, which, as being exposed to an attack by the Moors, had been well fortified; this he garrisoned, and deposited his stores there. The Sicilians might well be alarmed at these summary proceedings: the conduct of those English who went on shore was neither likely to win their good will nor to lessen their apprehensions; and on the day after this last act of aggression a quarrel arose, and they shut the gates of the city. Richard exerted himself greatly to repress the tumult that ensued; and when his troops would have stormed the walls, he rode through their ranks, commanding them to desist, and striking with his truncheon those who were most violent. But these efforts only partially succeeded; and it was not till, having armed himself and gone forth a second time, that an appearance of order was restored. He then took boat for the king of France's quarters to consult him; and by the endeavours of the chief persons in authority on both sides the uproar was allayed, the crusaders retired to their ships or quarters, and the Sicilians to their homes.

A.D. 1190.

On the morrow, a conference for the purpose of adjusting all differences was held at Cœur de Lion's place of abode: the chiefs and prelates of the crusaders convened there; and the principal Sicilian authorities and clergy came thither with the king of France. While they were deliberating with the sincere desire on

* "Transivit Fluvium del Far (so Hoveden calls the straits of Messina) et cepit munitissimum locum qui dicitur le Banare." Possibly Bagnera may be the place intended. Robert of Brunne says it was an island possessed by the Saracens, and that Richard slew them all, "riff and raff."

all sides of coming to reasonable terms of accord, the Sicilians, . . a warlike people, . . confiding, perhaps, in their numbers and in the strength of their city, (which had been strongly fortified with towers and lofty bulwarks by their first count Roger, about a century before, as the key of the island,) and more impatient of the insolence of the crusaders than mindful of their force, gathered together upon the adjacent heights, and manifested a disposition to insult the English, if not an intention of attacking them. Some of them broke into the quarters of Hugo le Bruin, and wounded him; and so great an uproar arose, that Richard, hastily leaving the conference, ordered all his people to arms; and not waiting till they could be assembled, set off in person with the few who were presently ready, to ascend the heights. The Sicilians seem to have apprehended no danger on that side: they fled towards the city, and were closely pursued: some of the English entered before the gates could be closed; but their comrades having by this time assembled in force and fury, the walls were stormed, the gates forced, with the loss of five knights and twenty of their attendants, and the English banners were planted on the towers. It is said that Philip was offended at this, and demanded that his own banners should be planted in their stead : . . it is more likely that he wished to see them side by side. Even this would not have been endured by the English, who, considering it as a common cause, were displeased that the French had carefully abstained from taking any part in the assault; but Richard prevented any farther displeasure on either part by ordering his own banners to be taken down, and those of the Knights Hospitallers and Templars to be set up in their stead; and he gave the city in charge to those knights till his demands upon Tancred should be satisfied.*

Tancred fortunately was not in Messina at this time; and before he returned, the kings of England and France,

* Gaufred Monachus, lib. iii. § 32. Apud Carusii Bibl. Hist. Regni Sic. tom. i. p. 221.

in the presence of the earls, barons, and others, both of the clergy and temporalty, solemnly swore each to defend the other upon the expedition, both going and returning, without subterfuge, and in good faith. And for the better governance of both armies, they made this ordinance with common consent, . . that no crusaders, no pilgrims as they were called, who chanced to die on this journey, should send any of their property home to their own country: their arms, horses, and apparel they might dispose of at pleasure, under this restriction, and half of every thing besides; but the other half should be taken possession of by certain persons named for that purpose, and go toward the support of the war in the Holy Land. Playing for money at any game was prohibited, with this exception, that the two kings might play, and command their servants to do so in their presence, but so that the loss in one day and night should not exceed twenty shillings: knights and chaplains might play to the same amount, but were to forfeit fourfold as often as they lost more than the sum appointed; and the servants of archbishops, bishops, earls, and barons, might in like manner play by their masters' command; but if any servants were found to play without such licence, they were to be whipped round the camp, naked, on three successive days; if any mariners, they were to be ducked three mornings in the sea; and any others of like mean degree, being neither knights nor chaplains, were to be whipped as servants. All these offenders, however, might redeem themselves from personal punishment by a payment at the discretion of those persons at whose disposal half the property of the dead was placed, such payment and such fines for the offence being appropriated to the costs of the war. A pilgrim who borrowed of another whilst they were on the expedition was bound to pay the debt; but if it were contracted before they set forth, he was not bound to answer it till his return home. No one might entertain the servant or hired mariner of another, if such person departed from his master without licence; a

discretionary fine was the penalty. There might be no regrating of meal or bread within the compass of the camp, unless it were brought there by a stranger; nor might any thing be bought to sell again in the camp, or within a league of it, except beasts to be killed within the camp. Bread made for sale was to be after the rate of penny loaves, the English penny being valued at four-pence Anjouvine. Other occupiers in whatever wares they dealt might lay on no greater profit than one tenth; and the king's money was not to be refused, unless it were broken within the circle.

The king of England demanded from the king of Sicily, in behalf of the dowager-queen Joan, the whole province or county of Mount St. Angelo, with all its appurtenances, as settled upon her for her dowry; a golden chair, to which as queen she was by the custom of that kingdom entitled; a golden table twelve feet in length, and a foot and a half in breadth; two golden trestles for supporting it; four-and-twenty silver cups, and as many silver dishes. He claimed, also, as the representative of his father, a present intended for him by king William the Good, and devised to him by that king in his last illness: it consisted of a silk tent, large enough for 200 knights to sit at meat within it *; sixty measures of wheat, as many of barley, and as many of wine; and 100 armed galleys, fully equipped, and victualled for two years. This, no doubt, was intended not only as a mark of friendship, but as a pious contribution to the holy war. Large as these demands were, there was no difficulty in compounding them. The dowager-queen had no inclination to remain in Sicily, and Tancred was desirous of obtaining Cœur de Lion's friendship; because the acts of hostility which

* Robert of Brunne gives a more dignified standard of admeasurement: he says it was

> "A pavillon of honour with rich atisfement,
> To serve an emperour at a parlement." Vol. i. 152.

Hearne explains *atisfement* to mean *tissues, silks, interlacings.* It seems to be from the same root as the Spanish and Portugueze verb *ataviar*, to adorn, —which is of Arabic extraction. Probably, therefore, *ornament* is the meaning of the words: tissue and silks are not likely to have been specified of a *silken* tent.

already had taken place had raised against him an internal enemy. The Moors in Sicily, who were estimated at 100,000, and who had patiently, if not contentedly, remained in subjection during the preceding reign, had now retreated with their families and their cattle to the mountains, and commenced from thence a harassing war upon the Christians. Both parties, therefore, desiring an agreement, Richard engaged to assist Tancred, during his continuance in Sicily, against all enemies; and this had the immediate effect of reducing the Moors once more to obedience.* He accepted 20,000 ounces of gold for his sister, in lieu of all demands, and another equal sum on the score of his own. It seems, however, as if he felt that his own claims could not be legally maintained; for the two kings contracted that a marriage should take place, when the parties should be of suitable years, between one of Tancred's daughters, and Richard's nephew and presumptive heir, . . that prince Arthur, whose tragic story has been made familiar to all English readers by the greatest of all poets; and the 20,000 ounces which Richard received at this time were accepted by him as the dowry of this princess, to be repaid by him or his representative in case either of the parties should die before the contract could be fulfilled.

During the negotiations which terminated in this treaty, Richard acted in a manner that manifested his consciousness of might as well as right. Tancred, who, upon the arrival of his formidable guests, thought Messina no safe place of abode for himself, had left two of his chiefs in command of the city, one of them being his admiral. Whether these persons, as being his

* Richardus de S. Germano, in his Chronicon Siculum, makes no mention of any differences between Tancred and the king of England. He says, that the English and French kings, in a dispute which arose between them, burnt part of the city. "Quos dictus rex Tancredus magnis honorans xeniis, ne civitatem Messanæ destruerent, cum multis precibus impetravit."—(*Carusii, Bibl. Hist. Sic.* tom. ii. 548.) It is remarkable, that nothing more concerning these transactions is to be found in any of the Sicilian historians;—a proof how little we can rely upon any inferences drawn from the silence of early writers against a single evidence of weight.

favourites, dreaded Joan's resentment, or for whatever cause, they abandoned their charge, and, taking with them their families and their moveable wealth, fled from the city; upon which Richard, without ceremony, took possession of their houses, their galleys, and their other property. He strengthened the monastery which he had occupied as a depôt, by cutting a deep and wide fosse for its defence; and upon one of the neighbouring heights he erected a strong fort.* Philip is said to have resented the whole of Richard's proceedings, both during the negotiation, and in the negotiation itself, as a breach of the laws of hospitality towards a prince who had liberally received and entertained the allied crusaders. That he was jealous of the king of England's power is certain, and that, able as he was, he looked with an envious eye upon the superiority which general feeling conceded to Cœur de Lion because of the magnanimity of his character. There was also a matter in dispute between them which touched him nearly. His sister Adela had been contracted to Richard, and sent to Henry the Second's court, as the future daughter-in-law of that king; but the marriage was continually put off, and Richard himself believed that this had been in consequence of the most criminal conduct on his father's part. He refused, therefore, to fulfil the contract, asserting that he had full proof of his suspicions. Philip could not press the

* This fort he called Mategriffon. Richard's conduct was, perhaps, not so unwarrantable as it appears. The monastery which he had seized belonged to the Griffones,—a name given in those parts to the Greeks at that time, it is not known for what reason; but it seems that they were powerful in Sicily, and that in breaking their power Richard rendered good service to Tancred and the Sicilians. "Griffones verò ante adventum regis Angliæ erant potentiores omnibus regionem illum inhabitantibus, et odio habebant omnes homines Ultramontanos; adeo quod pro minimo habebant illos, interficere; nec erat qui adjuvaret. Sed ex quo rex Angliæ illuc venit, malitia illorum quievit, et potestas eorum minuta est, et facti sunt viliores omnibus inhabitantibus terram illam; et sperantes se posse contra regem Angliæ, sicut potuerunt contra cæteros in diebus antiquis, inciderunt in foveam quam fecerunt et facti sunt profugi in terra. Gens autem Anglicana in maximâ habebatur reverentiâ in regno Siciliæ" These are Hoveden's words; and, therefore, it was as much for Tancred's eventual benefit, as for his own immediate security, that Richard should give check-mate to the Griffons with his castle. So, too, with regard to the place called Labaniere,—to have taken it from the Sicilians would have been a direct act of unprovoked hostility, whereas the Sicilians might have been well pleased to see it taken from the Saracens.

contract under such disgraceful circumstances; and, indeed, Cœur de Lion had already asked and obtained Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre, in marriage, and expected her to join him under her mother's care at Messina. The wrong here was not on Richard's part, but on his father's; who, when in his last illness he breathed a curse upon his undutiful sons, might have been better employed in imploring forgiveness for his own misdeeds. This, therefore, led to no breach between the two kings; and a quarrel which arose between the French and English was appeased by their joint exertions.

One of Richard's galleys was sunk by a stroke of lightning in the harbour; and the fleet suffered so much from worms* while lying there, that it was found necessary to repair and careen many of the ships. Though he had as yet been in no danger himself by perils of the sea, yet those perils had been brought home to his feelings by what the French fleet, and some of his own also, had encountered. Much to his honour, this induced him, while in Sicily, still farther to relax the old laws concerning shipwreck, in favour of natural right; and he resigned all claims on behalf of the crown, in cases where all on board were lost, provided there were any children or brothers of the owners, who could prove themselves to be such. During the unusual tranquillity which his winter's abode at Messina afforded him, Richard's ever active mind took a religious turn: he began seriously to reflect upon the licentiousness of his former life; and, assembling all the prelates of his host in the chapel of the dwelling wherein he had taken up his quarters, he there confessed his offences upon his knees before them, expressed his contrition, and humbly re-

* "There are in that river of the Faro," says Hoveden (meaning the Straits of Messina), "certain slender worms, called, in the language of those parts, beom, who feed upon all kinds of wood; and when they adhere to any piece of wood, they never, unless they are forcibly removed, leave it till they have bored in. The holes which they make when they enter are small, but they grow and fatten so by feeding upon the wood, that they make large ones when they eat their way out."

In a report made to Henry VIII. concerning the state of his navy, it is said of one of the ships, that "she must be searched for worm-holes, *because she hath been in Levant*." — CHARNOCK'S *Hist. of Marine Architecture*, ii. 107.

ceived the penance which they enjoined him, promising to become, from thenceforth, a new man; and God, it is added, "looked upon him with eyes of mercy, and gave him a penitent heart, so that from that time he proved a man fearing the Lord, eschewing evil, and doing good." It may, perhaps, be true, that a feeling of revengeful anger was the only sin to which he ever afterwards yielded *, knowing it to be sinful: the barbarities which he committed in Palestine were looked upon both by himself and others as so many meritorious works.

That remarkable person, the abbot Joachim, whom many protestant writers have accounted among the precursors of Luther, and ascribed to him a degree of prophetical inspiration, probably more because of the hieroglyphical prints † which have been published as his designs, than from his genuine writings, was at that time living in Calabria, and his reputation was such, that Richard sent for him to Messina. Tancred, with whom he was now upon amicable terms, may have suggested this to him, for the sake of confirming Richard in the ill opinion which he entertained of the court of Rome; for the pope pretended a title to the realm of Sicily upon the death of the late king without issue male, and Joachim had declared loudly against the corruptions of the papal church. The abbot came at this flattering invitation, and edified Cœur de Lion by expounding the apocalypse; assuring him, we are told, that Antichrist

* Mr. Mills thinks that "the bold, ardent, and valiant Cœur de Lion, had more of the warlike spirit than of the religious feelings of the age" (ii. 16.) But Cœur de Lion never feigned what he did not feel, and Radulf of Coggeshall describes him as attending the offices of the church, not merely with outward decorum but with evident devotion. A curious proof of his sincerity is, that he abstained from the communion for nearly seven years before his death, because of the mortal hatred which he resented against Philip Augustus. "Ob tanti mysterii reverentiam, eo quod mortale odium erga regem Galliæ in corde gestaveret."—(*Rad. Cogg. Martene et Durand, Col. Amplies. tom.* v. 857.) The provocation was, indeed, great, for Philip Augustus had been a base enemy to Cœur de Lion.

† They were published at Venice, 1639, in a curious volume, with the accompanying prophecies in Latin and Italian, and annotations by Paschalinus Regiselmus. Baronius (xii. 893.) justly takes occasion, from this interview, to discredit the supposed prophet. "Plane tam suis ipsius vanis responsis, quam inanibus propheciis, inventus est non Dei propheta, sed pseudo-propheta esse. Nam prædixit pleraque ventura, quæ re vera non habuerunt eventu. Quod quidem signum Deus dedit populo suo ad cognoscendum prophetam verum à falso."

was born, and then in the city of Rome. Richard went afterwards to visit Tancred at Catania, and both kings paid their devotions with great solemnity at the shrine of St. Agatha in that city. There Tancred offered many and costly presents to his now sworn friend; of which Richard accepted four large ships* and fifteen galleys for the holy warfare in which he was engaged, but for himself he took only a small ring in token of friendship: in return, he presented the king of Sicily with the most precious of all romantic relics, if its authenticity could have been ascertained, . . king Arthur's enchanted sword Excalebar. Tancred accompanied his guest two days' journey on his return to Messina; and on the way communicated to him, it is said, a letter which the duke of Burgundy had delivered to him from the king of France, wherein Philip denounced Cœur de Lion as a traitor, who had no intention of observing the peace he had made; and offered to assist Tancred with all his forces against him. Cœur de Lion, upon this, replied, "I am no traitor, nor ever have been, nor ever will be: the peace which I have made with you I have kept, and will faithfully keep; nor can I easily believe that the king of France should have acted thus concerning me; being, as he is, my liege lord, and my sworn comrade in this pilgrimage." The letter, however, was placed in Richard's hands; and Tancred declared, that if the duke of Burgundy denied having brought it, he would prove the charge upon him by one of his barons. When the kings of France and England met shortly afterwards, Richard's lowering countenance, which, like his temper, was incapable of dissimulation, gave manifest token of a displeasure, the cause for which he presently expressed. Philip pronounced the letter to be a forgery, and accused Richard in his turn of seeking a pretext for breaking off their alliance. It seems that the question concerning his sister Adela had not yet been definitively settled: however culpable that princess might have been, a great wrong had been offered to the royal family of France in her

* "Quos vocant ursers."—*Hoveden.*

person; and though Richard was entirely innocent of that wrong, some compensation, if only to save appearances, might properly be expected. To an intention of quarrelling upon this point, Philip imputed the present charge: but as Richard had no such view, his straightforward purpose having already been declared; and as the king of France, on his part, denied any knowledge of the letter, the chiefs on both sides, who had the interest of the expedition at heart, succeeded in bringing about an apparent reconciliation. The story is a strange one; for it is utterly improbable either that Philip should have written such a letter, or that Tancred should have forged it, or any other person: but the subsequent conduct of Philip Augustus towards Cœur de Lion made the English ready to believe any thing to his dishonour; and when that disposition exists, calumnies will always be invented to gratify it.

A treaty was now concluded between the two kings, in which all their contending claims were for the time adjusted; and the French, towards the end of March, sailed for Palestine. On the evening after their departure, the dowager queen Eleanor arrived, bringing with her her son's betrothed bride Berengaria. They had travelled by land from Navarre to Naples, escorted by the earl of Flanders; and, arriving there in February, proceeded to Brindisi, where they waited till Philip should have sailed. Eleanor, who, whatever she may have been as a wife, always seems to have performed the duties of a careful mother, consigned her charge then to her daughter, queen Joan *; and after remaining only four days in Messina, embarked for England. No political considerations had influenced Cœur de Lion in his choice of a wife. He had seen Berengaria in her own country; had fallen in love with her while still fettered with a matrimonial contract, from which, for the strongest motives, he was determined to free himself; and had inspired her with a passion that participated of his own romantic

* Robert of Brunne says:—
"Dame Joan kept her dear, they lyved as bird in cage." vol. i. 153.

character. Instead of being escorted to her bridal and coronation at the court of the great kingdom which had adopted her, Berengaria came to join her betrothed husband on a distant and most hazardous expedition, and accompany him on his crusade to Palestine; the first woman of her rank who partook in the merit, the danger, and the glory of such an adventure, but not the last; for she had an illustrious imitator in Eleanor, who, like her, was of Spanish birth, and, like her, the wife of an English prince. The expedition * was so nearly ready for sea when she arrived, that the marriage was not celebrated at Messina; and Berengaria embarked for the Holy Land, not in the ship with Richard, but with the dowager queen Joan.†

The fleet with which Cœur de Lion sailed from Sicily, consisted of thirteen of those large vessels called dromones‡; 150 of what were then called busses; fifty-three§ galleys, and a great number of small craft. The Sicilians said that so fine a fleet had never before been seen in the harbour of Messina, and probably never again would. They were amazed at the magnitude, and number, and beauty of the ships.|| The French part of the armament had excited no such admiration; and the feeling of envious hostility which the French king afterwards manifested toward Richard, was, in part, no

* Thirty busses from England had just arrived, bringing out stores and men. Robert of Brunne says, they came with the king's mother; but she came by land from Navarre to the Mediterranean.

† In the French continuation of William of Tyre's history (apud Martene et Durand, Coll. Amplis. tom. v. 632), it is said, that when queen Isabella and Berengaria arrived at Messina, Richard had sailed, and queen Joan was to sail on the morrow. "La roine d'Angleterre li dist, Belle fille menés-moi cette damoiselle au roi vostre frère, et li dite que je li mande qu'il l'espouse. Cele la receut volentier, et la roine retorna arière en Poitou."

‡ "Mighty great ships with triple sails," Holinshed describes these, meaning that they were three-masted. The busses he calls "carikes, or rather hulks," ii. 220.

§ All but the victuallers, probably, were prepared for defence; but the galleys seem to have been the only men-of war. The Romance of Richard Cœur de Lion says, he departed from Messina

"With two hundred ships, I find,
Sailing forward with the wind,
And afterward fifteen galleys
For to ward his navies."

Weber's Metrical Romances, ii. 97.

|| Henry, iii. 508. Gauf. Vinesauf quoted.

doubt, occasioned* by the knowledge of his naval superiority. The sailors, also, were what English sailors from that time have never ceased to be: in the storms which they encountered on their way to the Levant, they are said, by one who was in the fleet, to have done every thing that it was possible for human skill to do.† More than any other historical character, Richard Cœur de Lion resembles a knight of romance; and the circumstances which occurred in his way to Palestine have the air of an adventure in romance more than of authentic history, though the facts are incontestable. "He was no sooner abroad in the main sea, but a great tempest arose, wherewith his whole navy was sore tossed and turmoiled up and down the seas."‡ The king himself was driven first to Crete, afterwards to Rhodes. Three of his ships foundered off the coast of Cyprus: three others were refused admittance into the harbours there; they were wrecked in consequence, and the men who escaped to shore were cast into prison. The vessel with queen Joan and the lady Berengaria on board was driven in the same direction: they requested permission to land, announcing who they were, and that permission was refused. One of the Comneni family, Isaac by name, had taken possession of Cyprus for himself in full sovereignty. Like other Greeks, or Griffons as they were called, he thought that the crusaders, if not worse than Saracens, were quite as much to be dreaded: such reports as might reach him of Richard's exploits at Messina were not likely to induce a more favourable opinion; and he had at this time assembled his forces at

* De Serres imputes it to personal dislike, for which he accounts thus oddly: — "Les rois jurerent-la une amitié fraternelle et inviolable; de fait la continuelle et familière hantise du chemin apporta bien la privauté, mais la privauté engendra mespris, et le mespris haine, comme le progrès de l'histoire le monstrera; pour leçon fort notable aux rois et princes, jusques où ils se doivent privément frequenter." — *Inventaire Général de l'Hist. de France*, i. 381.

He allows, however, much to the affairs of the king's sister, Adela, "Ce clou estoit attaché au cœur de Philippe." p. 382.

† G. Vinesauf, quoted by Henry, iii. 509.

‡ Holinshed, ii. 220.

Limisso, with the determination of resisting any adventurers who might attempt to land.*

Rhodes was not so distant, but that Richard heard how his people had been treated by the Cypriot emperor (as he was styled) in time to demand redress. He made immediately for Limisso, and found his affianced wife and his sister still off the harbour, in which they had been inhospitably, if not inhumanly, forbidden to enter. Perhaps the very strength of his resentment made him feel that it became him on this occasion to restrain his anger. Thrice he demanded the liberation of his people, and the restitution of whatever had been saved from the wrecks: those demands proving ineffectual, he then proceeded to take the justice that was denied him, and to inflict due punishment upon the offender. Isaac had easily captured men exhausted by long struggling with tempestuous weather, and who had hardly saved their lives by swimming to shore; but he must have been the weakest of men to think of opposing a fleet of crusaders with a host of undisciplined and half-armed Cypriots. Few of them, it is said, had any better weapons than clubs or stones; and they thought to protect themselves with a barricade formed of logs, planks, chests, and benches, . . whatever could hastily be brought together. Richard, meantime, proceeded toward the landing-place with his galleys and small boats. His archers led the way, and soon cleared it; for their arrows are said to have fallen on the Cypriots like rain upon the summer grass. The victors, "being but footmen, weatherbeaten, weary, and wet," were in no plight for pursuing the routed enemy: they entered the town, and found it deserted by the inhabitants, but

* "Porce que cil que aloient et venoient outre-mer vousissent faire force en l'isle, ne rober, qu'il fust apareillé du defendre." — *Cont. of Willyam of Tyre*, 632. In this old French account, it is said, not that this vessel was driven to Cyprus by stress of weather, but that it arrived there when Joan and the lady Berengaria were cruising in quest of the bridegroom; that they were preparing to send a boat in and enquire for tidings of him, when Isaac sent one out to learn who they were: having been informed, he invited them on shore to refresh themselves; and, on their refusing to land, sent four galleys to capture their ship. The ship stood off, and presently fell in with Richard and his galleys.

full of wealth and of provisions of every kind.* Such of his ships as were collected then entered the port; and Berengaria, and his sister, were received by Richard as a conqueror in the city where a refuge from the sea had been refused them.

During the course of the day, Isaac rallied the fugitives, about six miles from the town; and, as if he supposed that weakness alone had withheld the crusaders from pursuing their advantage, prepared to attack them on the morrow. But Cœur de Lion allowed him no time for this. Intelligence of his movements and of his designs was easily obtained, for Isaac was a tyrant; guides also offered themselves; food, wine, and success had presently refreshed the English: long before daybreak they were armed, and in motion; and the Cypriots were taken so completely by surprise, that they were "slain like beasts."† The emperor Isaac escaped, not only unarmed, but half naked‡; so utterly had he been unprepared for such an attack. His horses, his armour, and his standard, were taken. The standard was sent to England; and when Cœur de Lion returned thither, he deposited it himself at king St. Edmund's shrine.§ Terrified at this second discomfiture, Isaac now sent ambassadors, proposing to restore

* Mills, ii. 39. Turner, i. 371. Holinshed, ii. 220.

† It was in Cyprus, according to the romance, that Richard first made use of that famous battleaxe which, before he departed from England, he had had made,

— "for the nones,
To break therewith the Saracen's bones.
The head was wrought right wele,
Therein was twenty pounds of steel.
And when he came into Cyprus land,
The axe he took in his hand.
All that he hit he all-to-frapped;
The Griffons away fast rapped:
Nathless many he cleaved,
And their unthanks there byleved."

Weber's Met. Rom. ii. 87.

‡ Robert of Brunne has not failed to notice this:—

"Bare in serke and breke, Isaac away fled." i. 161.

§ Recognising thus, I think, the miracle related in a former note (p. 148.). Of the three saints who had taken charge of his fleet, this was the one whom Richard would prefer: St. Thomas à Becket was not likely to be particularly admired by a king of England; and St. Nicholas was less popular among the English than their royal countryman, round whose magnificent church the town of St. Edmundsbury had grown.

the prisoners whom he had unjustly captured, with all that had been saved from the wrecks; to pay 20,000 marks in amends for the loss that had been sustained by shipwreck; to accompany Cœur de Lion to the Holy Land, and serve him there with 100 knights, 400 light horsemen, and 500 well-armed foot; to acknowledge him for his sovereign lord, and swear fealty to him accordingly; and place his daughter and heiress, as hostage, in his hands. These conditions, which were, probably, more rigorous than Richard would have thought of imposing, were admitted. Isaac then came to the king of England in the field; and there, in presence of the chiefs of the crusaders, swore fealty, and promised, upon his oath thus pledged, not to depart till he should have performed all for which he had engaged. By this time Richard had been made too well acquainted with his character to place much reliance either upon his word or oath; tents were assigned for him and his retinue, and a guard was appointed to keep him in custody. Offended at this, or affrighted by it, and with that inconsistency which proceeds from rashness as well as fear, he withdrew during the night, while his guards, suspecting no such evasion, were asleep, and then sent messengers to renounce the treaty which he had made.*

Richard is said not to have been displeased at the opportunity that this fresh provocation afforded him. Guy of Lusignan, the dethroned king of Jerusalem, and the last Christian who bore that title otherwise than as an empty pretension, having purchased his liberty from Saladin by the surrender of Ascalon, came at this time to Cyprus, with his brother Geoffrey, with Raymond prince of Antioch, and Boemund his son, and other ejected lords of Palestine, to implore Richard's assistance for re-establishing them in their lost estates. Richard intrusted part of his army to Guy and Raymond, that they might pursue Isaac, and prosecute the conquest of the island by land; while he with one part of his galleys,

* Holinshed, ii. 221. Turner, i. 371. Henry, iii. 131—183.

and Robert de Turnham with the other, coasted it and cut off his flight by sea. Wherever they came, the towns, cities, and castles on the coast, were abandoned at their approach, and they took possession of all the shipping. Having thus swept the coast, and precluded the possibility of the emperor's escape from the island, Richard returned to Limisso, and there was married to the lady Berengaria by one of his own chaplains; his queen was crowned the same day by the bishop of Evreux; the bishop of Bayonne, and the archbishops of Apamea and Aux, assisting at the solemnity. Cyprus is the first island that was ever conquered by an English fleet; and Berengaria the only English queen whose coronation was ever performed in a foreign country. He then moved into the interior, to complete the conquest. Nicosa, the capital, was presently surrendered, and the strong castle of Cheria afterwards, with which Isaac's daughter yielded herself to the conqueror, who placed her as a companion with the queen. Toward the father he was less courteous: that rash and unhappy man had taken refuge in a monastery; and when he heard that the place of his retreat was discovered, and that Richard was marching thither, every strong-hold in the island having been given up, he threw himself upon his mercy, praying only that his life and limbs might be spared. Mercy was a virtue but little practised in those times. Richard sent him to Tripoli, there to be kept close prisoner in chains. When the wretched man heard this sentence, he said that if he were put in irons, it would soon occasion his death: upon which Richard, with contemptuous bitterness, replied, "He saith well; and seeing that he is a nobleman, and that our mind is not to shorten his life, but only to keep him safe, that he may not start away again and do more hurt, let his chains be made of silver!"

Isaac has not been deemed worthy of any further notice by those who recorded the events of Richard's crusade; most probably he died in confinement: nor is any thing more related of his daughter, than that

queen Berengaria either had, or thought she had, cause for regretting that her husband had placed so attractive a companion about her person. The Cypriots, as is always the lot of a conquered people, paid heavily for passing from one yoke to another: they were immediately taxed to the unmerciful amount of half their movables; and the stores that were found in the island were so considerable, that it is said the Christian armies in Palestine could hardly have carried on their operations had it not been for this great and casual supply.* After these exactions, Richard, considering Cyprus as his own by the acknowledged right of conquest, confirmed to the inhabitants the right and usages which they had formerly enjoyed under the Greek emperors, but which had been suspended during the late usurpation. He appointed Richard de Camuelle and Robert de Turnham governors of the island; and when, in the ensuing year, after a series of exploits which have rendered his name almost as celebrated in Mahommedan history as in European romance, he was about to leave Palestine, having been prevented, by the withdrawal of the French king, from restoring Guy de Lusignan to his lost kingdom of Jerusalem; he bestowed upon him the kingdom of Cyprus, as some compensation, .. a kingdom which his descendants continued to possess for nearly three centuries.†

Cœur de Lion was detained in Cyprus only a few weeks by his marriage, the conquest, and the settlement of the island. In his way from thence to Acre he fell in with a vessel of the largest size‡, sailing under French colours; but requiring more evidence than the

* Radulf of Coggeshall. Martene et Durand, v. 817.

† Holinshed, ii. 221, 222. Turner, i. 372. Henry, iii. 138.

‡ Robert of Brunne thus describes it, in lines remarkably harmonious for their age: —

> "At noon the tother day, they saw far in the sea,
> A grete busse and gay, full high of sail was he.
> The weather was full soft, the wynde held than stille,
> The sail was high o'loft, they had no wynd at will.
> In Philip navie of France, a pencelle they put out,
> His armes on a lance, over all the ship about.
> So mykel was that barge, it might not lightly sail,
> And so heavy of charge; and the wynde gan fail." i. 169.

colours and the suspicious language of the spokesman, he soon ascertained that it was a Saracen ship, laden with stores of all kinds for the relief of Acre, which the Christians were then closely besieging. The brother of Saladin had despatched it from Baruk: there were seven emirs on board; and the number of troops has been stated by the lowest account at 650, by the highest at 1500.* They were brave men, well provided with the most formidable means of defence; and desperate, because they knew how little mercy was to be expected from a fleet of crusaders. The size, and more especially the height, of their ship, gave them an advantage which for a while counterbalanced that of numbers on Richard's part; for his galleys could make but little impression upon her strong sides. Richard's people, brave as they were, were daunted by the Greek fire, which was poured upon them, which they had never encountered before, but of which what they had heard was enough to impress them with dread. The great dromond, as she is called, might probably have beaten off her assailants and pursued her course, if Richard's men had not dreaded their king's anger more even than the terrible fire of the enemy. "I will crucify all my soldiers if she should escape!" was his tremendous threat. His example availed more than his threat could have done: they boarded the huge hulk like Englishmen; and the Saracens, when they saw themselves overpowered, ran below by their commander's order, and endeavoured to sink the ship, that their enemies might perish with them. Part of the cargo, however, was saved before she sunk, and some of the crew * were taken to mercy, though mercy was not the motive; for it was the chiefs, it is said, who were spared, for the sake of their ransom. If the stores and ammunition with which this ship was laden had reached Acre, it was thought that the city could never have been taken.†

* "Thirteen hundred of which miscreants," says Speed (476.), "he sacrificed to Mars and Neptune." A Mahommedan might argue from these words, that the crusaders were heathens, and that they offered human victims to their false gods.

† Turner, i. 399. Mills, ii. 41. James, 247.

It appears that the ships of war at this time were all galleys; that few of them had more than two rows of oars, and many of them only one tier: these, being shorter, and moved with more facility, were used in the Levant for throwing wild fire. This composition, which the Greeks called liquid fire*, and which by Latin and later historians is commonly denominated Greek fire, is said to have been invented by Callinicus, an architect of Heliopolis (afterwards called Balbec), about the latter part of the seventh century; and it continued in use some six hundred years, till the more destructive powers of gunpowder were applied to the purposes of war. The invention proceeded from the school of Egyptian chemistry; for Callinicus was in the service of the caliphs, from whence he went over to the Greek emperor, expecting, perhaps, a better reward for his discovery from the government to which it would be most useful. Constantinople was, indeed, saved by it in two sieges; Saracen fleets were deterred from attempting to pass the straits of the Hellespont, when they knew† that their enemies were prepared with it; and while the Greeks kept the secret of the composition to themselves, as they did most carefully for four centuries‡, they possessed a more efficient means of defence than any other people. When the Pisans were at the height of their naval power, the emperor Alexius sent out a fleet against them, in which, as it appears, for the first time, lions-heads of bronze were fixed at the ships' prows, and from their open mouths this liquid fire was discharged in streams. This he devised as being likely to terrify as well as to astonish them; but the composition was, no

* πυρ ὑγρον.

† Nicephorus, c. ix. § 9.

‡ Gibbon, x. 17. Beckmann, however (Hist. of Inventions, English trans. iv. 83), says, that it was used by the Saracens in the year 904, at the siege of Thessalonica, when they blew fire through pipes into the wooden works of the besieged, and threw it among them from other vessels. This is stated by John Cameniata, who was a native of that city; and the words πυρ τι δια των σιφωνων τω αερι φυσησαντες, seem certainly to describe the Greek fire Yet I have met with nothing to induce a suspicion that the Saracens obtained the secret of this composition till long afterwards; nor had Gibbon, in his wide researches. Means of projecting combustibles had long been used; at the siege of Lucca, Narses threw fire into the town. Agathias, l. i. c. x. § 3.

doubt, sent with surer effect from movable tubes. The commander who led the way in this action wasted his fire; another officer, when in great danger, extricated himself by its use, and burnt four of the enemy's ships; and the Pisans, who saw that the fire spread upwards, downwards, or laterally, at the will of those who directed it, and that they could not by any means extinguish it, took to flight.*

The Greek fire was forced in its liquid state from hand engines, or thrown in jars; or arrows were discharged the heads of which were armed, more formidably than with their own barbs, with tow dipt in this dreadful composition.† During the crusades, the Saracens became possessed of the secret: whether they discovered it, or it was betrayed to them, is not known; but they employed it with terrible effect; and the crusaders, who feared nothing else, confessed their fear of this. At this time it was employed on both sides. The only description of a naval action in those ages, which explains the system of naval tactics, relates to the siege of Acre, in which Richard was engaged. The crusaders drew up their fleet in the form of a half moon, with the intent of closing upon the enemy if he should attempt to break their line. Their best galleys were placed in the two ends of the curve, where they might act with most alacrity, and least impediment. The rowers were all upon the lower deck; and on the upper the soldiers were drawn up in a circle, with their bucklers touching each other. The action began a discharge of missile weapons on both sides; the Christians then rowed forward with all stress of oars, endeavouring, after the ancient manner, to stave in their enemies' sides, or otherwise run them down: when they came to close quarters, they grappled; skill then was no longer of avail, and the issue depended upon personal strength and in-

* Anna Comnena, l. xi. c. ix. § 3. 5.

† Gibbon says, that it was also launched in red-hot balls of stone and iron. I doubt this.

trepidity.* The Greek fire seems to have been used even when the ships were fastened to each other: the likelihood of its communicating from the enemy's vessel to that which had thrown it, was much less when galleys were engaged, than it would be in vessels rigged like later men of war; and fire might be employed more freely, because there were no magazines in danger. The crusaders had so greatly the superiority at sea, owing as much to seamanship as numbers, that a sagacious prisoner, whom Philip Augustus interrogated concerning the best means whereby the Holy Land might be recovered and maintained, told him it would be by keeping the seas, and destroying the trade of Egypt. His advice was, that they should take Damietta, and rely upon their fleets more than upon their strength in horse and foot.†

A.D. 1192

The treasure or the blood which Cœur de Lion expended in this crusade, would neither have been spared if he had remained in Europe, nor expended to any better purpose: he would have been engaged in wars little less murderous; not so much in consequence of his own disposition, warlike as that was, as because of the spirit of the age, and his relative position toward France. He returned from Palestine without effecting the great object of his crusade; that object, if it were attainable, had been frustrated by the conduct of the French king. But he made an honourable peace with Saladin, and left an honourable name in the East, not for himself alone, but for his nation. The atrocious acts of barbarity which he had perpetrated there, were regarded, in the Mahommedan world, as ordinary affairs in war, rendering him terrible at the time, but not hateful afterwards. Even in Europe, it was not till nearly our own days that the recital of such actions excited horror and indignation. Richard Cœur de Lion was extolled by pope Celestine‡ for his humility, his

* Lyttelton, iii. 61, 62. His account is drawn from Geoffry de Vinesauf.

† Bzovius, Ann. Eccl. tom. xiii. 4.

‡ Baronius, xii. 870.

justice, his moderation. Even the people, from whom the heavy costs of the expedition were raised, and who were afterwards taxed to redeem him from his iniquitous imprisonment* by the duke of Austria, took a generous pride in the splendour of his exploits, and were grateful to him for the renown which he had added to the English name. His flag had been planted on the walls of Messina. He had beaten the misbelievers wherever he had encountered them. He had conquered the kingdom of Cyprus, and given it to the dethroned king of Jerusalem. He became immediately, and has continued to be even to these times, the hero of popular romances†; and with his expedition to Palestine it is, that the respect which has ever since been paid to the English flag originated.‡

Philip Augustus was bound by treaty and oath§, as well as by honour, not to make any attempt against the territories of Richard, till that king, his brother crusader, should have returned to them. When, however, Richard, in contempt of all laws, was detained a prisoner in Germany, Philip not only endeavoured by every means to obstruct his deliverance from captivity, but devised how best to take advantage of it, and, if possible, annex his dominions by conquest to his own; not those upon the continent alone, but England itself also. The latter was not so feasible a conquest, when Philip called to mind the display of naval force which he had

* The anonymous monk of Cassini relates the circumstances of this memorable captivity thus: — "Rex Angliæ Hierosolymâ rediens, in Theutonia captus, imperatori datur. Post modicum liberatum et secum retentum. Imperator, receptâ ab eo fidelitate, coronat, et regnum ejus auget." Apud Carusium, i. 516. Thus history is sometimes written.

† It was Madame de Staël's intention to have composed a romance upon his adventures in the East.

‡ Campbell, i. 103. "This famous king passes to the Holy Land," says Daniel, with the spoils and treasure of three rich islands, .. England, Sicily, and Cyprus, .. besides what Normandy and Guienne could furnish him withal; and there consumed that huge collected mass, even as violently as it was gotten, though to the exceeding great renown of him and the nation." p. 116.

§ The pope's expressions, in a letter to the bishop of Beauvais, are very strong: — "Rex vester regi Anglorum sacramento corporaliter præstito tenebatur astrictus, super indemnitate tam oppidorum quam terrarum suarum, sibi fideliter observanda, saltem usque ad reditum ab itinere peregrationes suæ. Sed contra fidem et sacramentum impudenter veniens, oppida prædicti regis violenter occupavit, terram suam hostili manu crudeliter vastavit." — *Baronius*, xii. 870.

seen with envious eyes at Messina. He looked about for a maritime ally: it occurred to him, that he might at the same time procure a pretext for the invasion, .. for even men who have as little conscience as Philip Augustus, desire, when it can be found, some plea for their acts of deliberate injustice; and being at that time a widower, he sent the bishop of Noyon, as ambassador to the king of Denmark, Canute VI., asking his sister Ingeborg* in marriage, and proposing, that instead of a dowry, the old claim of Denmark to the crown of England should be transferred with her to the king of France, and that the Danes should assist him annually with a maritime force, till the conquest should be completed. Canute laid the proposal before an assembly of the states. Their opinion was, that Denmark had war enough upon its hands with its neighbouring and pagan nation the Wends or Vandals, who would immediately assail their frontiers, if their forces were sent far off to attack an unoffending people, .. a great people too, abounding in wealth, and able to defend themselves against all foreign foes. The king of France's proposal, therefore, could not be admitted, and he must require some other dowry if he desired this marriage. Ten thousand marks of silver were then demanded; and with this portion the lady Ingeborg was delivered to the ambassadors.†

The further history of a marriage which originated thus in a desire of obtaining a fleet with which to invade and conquer England, may not unfitly be related here, as curiously illustrative of Philip's character, and of the times. The king met his bride at Arras, they were married there, and the queen was crowned with all solemnity. She was very beautiful, good, and accomplished as became her birth; but, during the ceremony, the king was observed to grow pale, and to regard her with

* The name is by some writers called Galberge, and in Baronius it is Botilda.

† Pontanus, 286. Holberg, i. 257. William of Newbury is the original authority.

an eye of displeasure; and only a few days elapsed before he repudiated her, upon a plea that the marriage was unlawful, because she was related to his former wife. When Ingeborg was made to understand the cause of her disgrace, she only pronounced the words, "Bad France, bad France!" and then the name of Rome, signifying that she appealed to the pope for justice. At that time she scarcely understood any French, and could not readily comprehend the nature of a plea, for which there was not, in truth, the slightest ground. When it had been perfectly explained to her, she refused to return to Denmark, and chose to retire into a convent, and there abide the decision of the cause from Rome. At that court, accordingly, Canute her brother preferred her just complaint. Meantime Philip assembled his bishops and nobles, and by the pedigrees which he laid before them, and which were falsified to serve his purpose, obtained from them a sentence, that the marriage, being unlawful in itself, was void. Theirs, however, was not the supreme court, and legates were sent from Rome to enquire into the proceedings and pronounce their sentence. They convened a council of all the archbishops, bishops, and abbots of the realm at Paris, expecting that, by their accordance in judgment, Philip would be obliged to take back his injured wife. But, says the French historian of this reign, the dogs were dumb, because they were in fear of their skins.* The proceedings were thus indefinitely prolonged; and in the third year after this summary divorce by his own lawless will, Philip Augustus married Maria, daughter of the duke of Moravia and Bohemia. Ingeborg, meantime, was treated with inhumanity, as well as odious injustice; the allowance made her was not sufficient for her decent support; she was without a friend to comfort her in her seclusion, and when the

* "Sed quia facti sunt canes muti, non volentes latrare, timentes pelli suæ, nihil ad perfectum deduxerunt." — *Rigordus, Hist. Franç. Script. Vet.* xi. 194.

kingdom, after another interval of three years, was laid under an interdict on this account, the king vented his anger, not upon the clergy alone who obeyed the pope, but upon his injured wife, whom he removed from the convent to a castle, and there put her in confinement. But the papal authority was then in full power; and on this occasion Philip had to resist something more formidable than its system of usurpation and its imperious violence, . . he had to contend against its moral strength.

A.D. 1119.

This he thought to overcome by fear: the people, deeply as in their hearts they resented the wrongs of a woman, had no voice; and when, at his demand, the cause was reheard at Soissons, though the falsehood of his plea had before been proved, he had secured the advocates (for Ingeborg had none to act for her), and he looked again for a favourable sentence from an assembly in which it was his intention that only one side should be heard. His orators spake with that zeal and ability which are too often professionally displayed in causes that are manifestly unjust: they were heard with the utmost attention, and, as it appeared, with assent: the same motives of hope and fear, which in the first assembly had kept "the dogs dumb," operated now also with equal force; and the king himself was present to see who were his friends, and to support by his presence his own suit. When the pleadings on his part were ended, there was no one to appear for queen Ingeborg. Proclamation was made that if any one were there to speak in her behalf he must now come forward: it was made a second time; and, as no one answered it, a third. But then a young man, whom no one knew, advanced from the crowd, and with great modesty requested a hearing. He spake on the queen's behalf with extraordinary eloquence, and with equal address, taking especial care to say nothing that could exasperate the king, but treating him with a degree of mildness and reverence, the effect of which was perceptible upon him and upon the whole assembly. As soon as his speech was finished he withdrew; nor was it ever dis-

covered who he was. Philip's aversion for his wife had been ascribed to witchcraft, and to the instigation of the devil: there were some who supposed this unknown youth to be an angel sent to plead the cause of the oppressed; though there were others who gave the Danes credit for having found a most able agent, and managing their cause with singular dexterity. Philip was so visibly moved by the speech itself, and by the manner in which he saw it was received by all present, that the court believed he would of his own accord take Ingeborg back; and, in that persuasion, they abstained from pronouncing sentence, that he might do it with the better grace, as of his own free will. But, shaken as he was, he preferred his Bohemian wife, and would not part with her. After as long an interval as could decently be allowed, the legate again convened the court; and by this time it was evident that the public feeling * would support him in a sentence against the king. Philip saw that the legate knew this: he felt it himself; and, leaving the court abruptly, he rode to the castle where Ingeborg was then confined, and, taking her from thence, sent word to the legate that he had taken home his wife. But this was only a feigned submission: Ingeborg was indeed acknowledged, and publicly treated as queen, while he continued to live with Maria as his wife, though not as the partner of his throne. But Ingeborg made no complaint: the legate, satisfied with this formal obedience, interfered no farther; and it was not till long after her rival's death, and twelve years † after the recognition of her rights, that, yielding either to public opinion, or to a late sense of duty,

A.D. 1201.

1213.

* "Jam liberior dolor voxque hominum, et magis apertus sensus erat, et præ se ferebant patres quidnam ipsis necesse foret decernere." — *Paulus Æmilius*, p. 203. Basil. 1569.

† Rigordus, 201. 211. The true conclusion of the story appears in this writer alone. Bzovius and Pontanus follow Paulus Æmilius, in representing the apparent reconciliation as complete. And De Serres makes the catastrophe immediately follow the young advocate's speech: in his narrative — "Philippe, sans s'arrêter en son palais, monte à cheval, et va incontinent au Bois de Vincennes, où il avoit confiné Gelberge; et l'ayant caressée le reçeut en sa bonne grâce, et passé avec elle en amitié conjugale le reste de ses jours" (tom. i. 365.) Thus, like a novel writer or a dramatist, he passes over an interval of twelve years.

he received her as her husband, to the great joy of the nation.

Such is the history of a marriage contracted because the king of France wanted to revive, in his own person, the old claims of Denmark to the throne of England, and to support them by a Danish fleet. Meantime he derived a traitorous assistance from some of those Englishmen in whom the love of gain prevailed over all other considerations. Cœur de Lion, after his deliverance, when engaged in war against him in Normandy, discovered that English ships came to St. Valery with stores, which were there purchased for Philip's army. Summary and indiscriminating punishment was inflicted for this treason: he rode to St. Valery, seized the stores, and distributed them among his own soldiers; burnt the ships which were found in the harbour, hung the sailors, and set fire to the town.*

A.D. 1196.

CHAP. IV.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF KING JOHN TO THE BATTLE OF SLUYS.

A. D. 1199—1340.

THERE is an old romantic story, once popular, and not yet entirely out of remembrance among the people, that friar Bacon, and his friend and fellow magician friar Bungay, spent five years in making a brazen head, for the purpose of learning from it in what manner all England might be secured by walling it round: a wall, it seems, they had concluded on, but concerning the mode of construction, and the materials, they required supernatural advice; and, perhaps, they wanted to know the spell which might render it impregnable. When their elaborate work was completed, the head spake

* Holinshed, ii. 263.

and told them; but not expecting it to speak so soon, they were not attending when it broke its brazen silence, and thus, losing the first part of its speech, they could not understand the rest.

The kings of England who were contemporary with friar Bacon, though they had neither heard of the Grecian oracle, nor the Athenian interpretation of it, relied upon their wooden walls. They looked upon ships, not only as a means of necessary defence, but of dominion and power. They had no navy: a standing fleet was as little known as a standing army; but the same feudal principle upon which armies were brought into the field was applied to the sea service; the Cinque Ports*, and other maritime towns, .. and, probably, some inland ones also, .. holding their charters by this tenure. The Cinque Ports were bound to provide among them fifty-two ships, and twenty-four men in each, for fifteen days, and to defend the coasts whenever they were required; and, upon extraordinary occasions, the old impost of danegelt was levied, as ship-money. Richard Cœur de Lion, when he spread the renown of the English name throughout the Levant, had shown that England was a great maritime power; and John, who succeeded him, miscreant though he was, had the merit of perceiving the true interests of the nation in this respect, and upholding its character with its strength. At whatever time the sovereignty of the seas may have been first assumed, John asserted and maintained it. Early in his reign, dishonourable in every way but this, he enacted, with the assent of his barons, that any ships of other nations, though at peace and in amity with England, should be made lawful prizes, if they refused to strike to the royal flag†; and, if they resisted,

A.D. 1200.

* Lyttelton, iii. 71.

† "Pour lour rebellette." The ordinance is given from a MS. of sir John Burroughs in the Museum, by Mr. Bree, in the Preface to his "Cursory Sketch of our Naval, Military, and Civil Establishments," &c., during the fourteenth century. The first volume, being, I believe, all that was published, relates exclusively to naval affairs. It is the crude compilation of a distressed man; but made from original documents, and contains much curious information.

the crews were to be punished with imprisonment at discretion. The claim was certainly not new; it was asserted because he was strong enough to enforce it. The only maritime powers by whom it could at that time have been resisted were those of the Mediterranean, who were too distant to regard, or, perhaps, to know that it had been made.

A remarkable circumstance is recorded as having happened in the early part of this king's reign, or in the latter years of his father's. Some fishermen of Orford caught in their nets what the chroniclers call a fish, but which they describe as "resembling in shape a wild or savage man: he was naked, and in all his limbs and members resembling the right proportion of a man: he had hairs also on the usual parts of his body, albeit that the crown of his head was bald; his beard was long and rugged, and his breast hairy." The fishermen presented him to Sir Bartholomew de Glanville, who had then the keeping of Orford castle. When meat was set before him, he greedily devoured it; and he ate fish, whether raw or boiled, only pressing in his hands those that were raw, till he had squeezed out the moisture. "He would get him to his couch at the setting of the sun, and rise again at the rising of the same. He would not, or could not, utter any speech; although, to try him, they hung him up by the heels, and miserably tormented him." His after-usage must have been exceedingly kind, and he must have been of a most forgiving temper not to resent this cruelty; for it seems that he was well reconciled to living ashore. One day they took him to the haven, and, enclosing a part of it with their strong nets, to prevent, as they thought, his escape, they let him take the water for his diversion. He presently dived under the nets, rose beyond them, sported about as if mocking at his keepers, and then, of his own accord, returned to them, and remained their guest about two months longer; then, being weary of a land life, he took an opportunity of stealing to sea.* Strange

* Holinshed, ii. 294. Fabyan (315.) says he was kept six months upon

as this story is, and incredible as it will be deemed by most readers, it is inserted here, because there is complete evidence that a similar circumstance occurred in the latter part of the seventeenth century, on the coast of Spain, with this remarkable difference, that the man who had there chosen an aquatic life, was recognised, and the history of his disappearance known at the place where he was supposed to have been drowned in bathing: he was carried back to his mother's house, remained there nine years, and then took again to the water.*

A.D. 1205. Amid all his disputes with the pope and with his barons, John never neglected his naval concerns, and, unpopular as he was with other classes, never lost the good will of the seamen. In the seventh year of his reign, with the advice of his council, he prepared for attempting to recover Normandy, of which Philip Augustus had possessed himself: a strong national feeling was manifested in favour of this just enterprise; the barons vied with each other in their preparations; and so large a fleet was collected at Portsmouth, that it was believed so many ships had never been brought together before: the number of mariners on board is stated at 14,000, who had come from all parts of the kingdom to serve their country. But when all things were ready, and all in heart and hope, the archbishop Hubert and the earl of Pembroke, for reasons which have not been explained, compelled, rather than persuaded, him to abandon his intention. Bitter curses were breathed by the sailors against the evil counsellors, as they deemed them, who had frustrated this mighty preparation; and John himself was "pinched so near the heart," by the disgrace and disappointment, that, having got to Winchester, he repented him of having yielded, turned back to Portsmouth, embarked, sailed out of the har-

land; and then, because "they could have no speech of it, they cast it into the sea again."

* The story is in Feyjoo's Theatro Critico, tom. viii. disc. 8.; where it is related with such circumstantial proof, that he who disbelieves it can have no other standard of belief than his own will and pleasure.

bour; and for two days kept hovering off, in hopes that the troops which had been dismissed would, when they heard this, follow his example; but it was too late.

A. D. 1212. An effort was made with more effect when Philip Augustus, under the pope's sanction, prepared, as the champion of the papal church, to invade England, and depose an excommunicated king. Philip had long been provided for such an enterprise; little caring under what pretext he might undertake it. The possession of Normandy had given him more ships and seamen than any former king of France had ever commanded; and, collecting them from other ports, wherever they were to be obtained, he had brought together, in the three harbours of Boulogne, Calais, and Gravelines, not less than 1700 vessels.* His army, too, was most formidable in number. Distracted as England was with internal troubles, greater vigour was never shown in its counsels than at this time. An embargo had been laid upon all ships capable of carrying six or more horses: in whatever ports they might be found, they were, if laden, to be unladed, and sent round to Portsmouth, well provided with good seamen, and well-armed; and the bailiffs of the respective ports were to see that they were properly furnished with movable platforms† for embarking and disembarking the horses. The fleet which he assembled is said to have been far stronger than the French king's‡; but this probably means in the size and equipment of the ships, and in the skill of the sailors, not in numbers. And "he had got together such an army of men out of all the parts of his realm, .. both of lords, knights, gentlemen, yeomen, and other of the commons, .. that, notwithstanding all the provision of victuals that might possibly be recovered, there could not be found sufficient store to sustain the huge multitudes of those that

* Rigordus, 212. Sueyro, Anales de Flandes, i. 260.
† "Pontibus et cleiis (Rymer's Fœdera, i. 117. last edition). The use of the latter word, in this place, shows that it was not erroneously written in another document for *clivis*, as Ducange supposed.
‡ Holinshed, ii. 305.

were gathered along the shore." A great number of the commons, therefore, were discharged, and sent home, retaining only the men-at-arms, yeomen, and freeholders, with the cross-bowmen or arbalisters, and archers. Even after this reduction, 60,000 men were assembled on Barham Downs; so that the chronicler might well say, "If they had been all of one mind, and well bent towards the service of their king and defence of their country, there had not been a prince in Christendom but that they might have been able to have defended the realm of England against him." The land preparations were rendered unnecessary by John's submission to the legate, Pandulph; when he surrendered his crown, and, receiving it again from him, as the pope's representative, swore fealty to the church of Rome, and bound his kingdom, by a written instrument, to an annual payment of 1000 marks for ever, in token of vassalage.

In those days this was not regarded as so unworthy an act as it is properly now considered; nor was it in fear of the foreign enemy that John had consented to it. Base as he was, he was of a race that never failed in courage. When Philip Augustus was informed, by the legate, that the king of England had submitted, and that, consequently, his aid was no longer required, for reducing the disobedient son of the church, he was exceedingly indignant; and his first impulse was to go forward with the enterprise, in defiance of the pope. All his nobles and feudatory chiefs concurred in this, except the earls of Boulogne and Flanders, whom a reasonable jealousy of Philip had induced to treat secretly with John. Their opposition frustrated his design, and he immediately turned his arms upon Flanders. Fernando de Portugal, son of king Sancho I., was then earl of Flanders, in right of Joanna his wife, . . a man more brave than fortunate; . . the name, indeed, in his family, seems to have carried misfortune with it. Philip had extorted from him, on his marriage, the towns of Aire and St. Omer, and the sense of the wrong then

done him was rankling in his mind. On the other hand, he had not acted now as an open enemy; and Philip, in the temper of one who was punishing a vassal for his breach of faith, besieged and with little opposition took Calais, took possession of Ypres and Bruges, and then laid siege to Ghent; sending his fleet, meantime, to Damme. Fernando sent over to England for immediate aid; and John forthwith despatched 500 sail, under William earl of Holland, William Longspear earl of Salisbury, his own bastard brother, and the earl of Boulogne.

Damme, which was now to be the scene of the first great naval action between the English and French, and the first great naval victory recorded in the English annals, was at that time the port of Bruges, from whence it is about a mile distant, being situated near the junction of the rivers Rey and Lieve. It is supposed to have been a settlement of the Alans, and that the dog, in the arms of the town, and of which a fabulous story has been invented, refers to this origin. Then, and long afterwards, the sea came up to its walls; till, about the year 1180, the Hollanders, with their characteristic and admirable industry, recovered here a track of rich country from the waters; and it was from the dam which they constructed for its defence, and which extends from thence to Sluys, that the town took its name. A channel for the waters was made, at the same time, two miles in length, forming what, for the vessels of that age, was a capacious harbour. The Hollanders, by whom this great work was planned and executed, settled there as a colony, greatly to the advantage of Flanders, from the earls of which province they obtained, in addition to the common privileges of Flemish subjects, an exemption from customs throughout the Flemish territory. In the course of little more than thirty years Damme had become the great emporium of those parts. No other part of Europe had advanced so rapidly in civilisation as this province. In the eighth century it was mostly covered with wood; and so infamous for the robberies

and murders committed upon those whose ill fortune led them thither, that it was called the Merciless Forest*: in the ninth, when the growing influence of religion had mitigated this barbarity, lands were given to any who would settle on them †; and in the tenth, when the manufactures to which it owed its early prosperity, and its after-troubles, were introduced into Ghent, "a rate of barter was fixed, for want of money.". By this rate two fowls went for one goose, two geese for one pig, three lambs for a sheep, and three calves for a cow.‡ In a little time the province was intersected with canals, and towns and cities arose and flourished; many of which, though fallen to decay, bear witness still, in the splendour of their public buildings, to their former affluence. Ghent was now the seat of its manufactures; Bruges of its merchants, and Damme was its port; whither, as to a certain mart, the produce of the country, the furs of Hungary, the wines of Gascony and Rochelle, and the cloths of England, were brought, and from whence they were distributed to all parts.§

When the French arrived off this harbour, they offered peace to the inhabitants, who were wholly incapable of defending themselves against such a force: they obtained the money which they demanded as its price, and then they plundered the place.|| Not satisfied with

* Sueyro, i. 21. † Ibid. i. 24. ‡ Ibid. i. 54.

§ Lud. Guicciardini, Belgii Desc. 397. Jac. Marchantii Flandria, p. 53. Sanderi Flandria Illustrata, tom. ii. 273.

|| This, with other curious particulars concerning the trade of the place, we learn from Brito's honest verses. He calls the French commander Savaricus; Sueyro calls him Savary, which is, doubtless, the real name; and Sanders is mistaken in naming him Auriacus.

——— "Opes cunctis è partibus orbis
Navigio advectas supra spem repperit omnem;
Infecti argenti massas rubeique metalli,
Stamina Phœnicum rerum et cladumque labores,
Et quas huc mittit varias Hungaria pelles,
Granaque vera quibus gaudet squalata rubere:
Cum ratibus vino plenis Vasconia quale
Vel Rupella parit; cum ferro cumque metallis;
Cum pannis rebusque aliis quas Anglia, vel quas
Flandria contulerat illuc, mittantur ut inde
In varias partes mundi, dominisque reportent
Lucra suis, quibus est spes semper mixta timori

this, they proceeded to ravage the country round about; and the sailors, as well as land forces, were thus employed when the English fleet, cruising in search of their enemy, approached. The English, as they neared the coast, espied many ships lying without the haven, which, capacious as it was, was not large enough to contain them all, many, therefore, were riding at anchor without the haven's mouth, and along the coast. Shallops were presently sent out to espy whether they were friends or enemies; and if enemies, what their strength, and in what order they lay. These espials, approaching as if they had been fishermen, came near enough to ascertain that the ships were left without sufficient hands to defend them; and, hastening back, told the commanders that the victory was in their hands, if they would only make good speed. No time was lost: they made sail toward the enemy, and won the "tall ships" which were riding at anchor, with little difficulty, the men on board only requesting that their lives might be spared. The smaller ones, which were left dry when the tide was low, they spoiled of whatever was useful, and set on fire, the sailors escaping to the shore. This done, they set upon those that lay in harbour, within the haven; and "here was hard hold for a while," because of the narrowness of the place, allowing no advantage for numbers or for skill. "And those Frenchmen" says the chronicler, "that were gone abroad into the country, perceiving that the enemies were come, by the running away of the mariners, returned with all speed to their ships to aid their fellows, and so made valiant resistance for a time; till the Englishmen, getting on land, and ranging themselves on either side of the haven, beat the Frenchmen so on the sides, and, the ships grappling to-

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Sorte comes dubia, subitique angustia casus:
Omnia quæ pyrata rapax Savaricus et ejus
Dira cohors inidem sibi concionata Cadoco,
Indigenis contra percussæ fœdera pacis,
Diripuere sibi, sociis juvantibus ipsos,
Non veriti violare fidem pactumque negare,
Quæ nostris peccata reor nocuere carinis."—*Philippidos*, lib. viii.

gether, in front, that they fought as it had been in a pitched field, till that, finally, the Frenchmen were not able to sustain the force of the Englishmen, but were constrained, after long fight and great slaughter, to yield themselves prisoners."

The first act of the conquerors was to give thanks to God for their victory. They then manned three hundred of the prizes, which were laden with corn, wine, oil, and other provisions, and with military stores, and sent them to England; the first fruits of that maritime superiority for which the church bells of this glorious island have so often pealed with joy. An hundred more were burnt, because they were drawn up so far upon the sands, that they could not be got out, without more hands and cost of time than could be spared for them. There still remained a great part of the enemy's fleet, higher up the harbour, and protected by the town, in which Philip had left a sufficient force to protect the stores which he had left there, and the money for the payment of his troops.* The English landed; the earl of Flanders joined them, and they proceeded to attack the place; but by this there had been sufficient time for the French king to hasten, with an overpowering force, from the siege of Ghent. The English, and their allies sustained a sharp action, and were compelled to retreat to their ships, with a loss, computed by the French at 2000 men. But they retreated no farther than to the near shores of the Isle of Walcheren; and Philip saw the impossibility of saving the remainder of his fleet, considering the unskilfulness of his own seamen, as well as other things. He set fire to them, therefore, himself, that they might not fall into the enemy's hands. Such was the fate of that great naval armament, which is said to be the first French fleet mentioned in his-

* This also Brito mentions in the report of an affrighted messenger to Philip:—

" Nec Gulielmus habet pullus ferrata tueri
Dolia quo possit, quæ plena numismata turgent
Quo solet ipse tuis numerare stipendia castris,
Pollici dispensans fiscalia dona fideli."—*Philippidos*, lib. viii.

tory*; and, as if the unfortunate town of Damme, which he had promised not to injure, and the foreign merchants to whom his word was pledged, had not suffered enough by the previous spoil, he set the place on fire also, and it was consumed†; and he wasted the country round with fire.

The troubles with which England was continually agitated during John's eventful reign reduced that miserable king, in his latter years, to such extremities that he was fain to hide himself in the Isle of Wight; and while his agents were employed, some in soliciting the court of Rome to interfere in his behalf, and others in engaging mercenaries for his service, he courted the favour of the Cinque Ports, and encouraged them to make prize of any ships which were suspected not to be his friends‡; so that his enemies had some reason for representing him as a sea rover. The pope espoused his cause, and mercenaries came at his invitation§, . . . chieftains who were "desperate adventurers, leading an execrable sort of people, whose miserable fortunes at home easily drew them to any mischiefs abroad." One formidable band perished by shipwreck between Calais and Dover, with their commander Hugh de Boues, . . . a brave but turbulent Frenchman, who was banished from his own country. The eastern coast, as far as Yarmouth, was strewn with their bodies; and, probably, so great a loss of life|| was never occasioned by any one

A.D. 1215.

* Charnock, i. 311.

† Rigordus, 212. Sanderus, ii. 204. Holinshed, ii. 309, 310. Sueyro, i. 262. There is a most remarkable mis-statement of these facts in the Chronicon Turonense, worthy of Bonaparte's *Moniteur.* — "Cumque rex Francorum — multitudinem navium præparasset, armisque aliis necessariis onerasset, *quidam missi a rege Angliæ latenter venientes*, fere totam illam multitudinem navium rapuerunt, secumque in Angliam perduxerunt. (They stole the fleet!) Paucas tamen naves quæ remanserunt jussit rex iratus comburi, sed et quamdam villam in portu sitam, eo quod incolæ irruentes cognoverant et consenserant advenisse." — *Martene et Durand, Coll. Amp.* v. 1049.

‡ Holinshed, ii. 323.

§ Saverier de Mauleon, one of the men of great nobility, and right worthy warriors, who came out of parts of Poictou and Gascony to serve him, having under them great numbers of good soldiers and tall men of war, may probably be the same person who commanded Philip's armament and plundered Damme.

|| Matthew Paris states their numbers at 40,000, which is incredible; but the force must have been numerous which could have led to such an exaggeration. Holinshed, 325.

storm before or since in those seas. It was reported that the whole county of Norfolk had been assigned by the king to these allies, and that the natives were to have been punished for their adherence to the barons, by expelling them to make room for the new settlers. Their fate, therefore, was regarded by the nation as a providential deliverance, seeing that they must "needs have lived upon the country, which would have been sore oppressed by such multitudes of strangers, even to the utter undoing of the inhabitants wheresoever they should have come."* John regretted it at the time as a great misfortune; but he learned afterwards how little reliance was to be placed upon men of this stamp, who served only for pay and for plunder; for in the ensuing year most of his hired forces left him †, and not a few entered into the service of the French prince, Louis, to whom his factious barons had traitorously offered the crown.

The death of this king was a happy event for the nation, though he left a child of nine years' old to succeed him. In most of the barons, who so often combined against him, there had been far more of personal animosity than of principle, .. more, perhaps, even than of personal views. But a child was an object of compassion; and they who already repented of having called in a foreign enemy were no longer withheld by hatred or by shame from following their English feelings, and taking the better part. Louis's tide of fortune began to ebb, when a force of 300 knights, with a great body of soldiers, embarked at Calais for his support, in a fleet consisting of eighty great ships and many smaller vessels, commanded by Eustace the monk. This man, who was a Fleming by birth, had left his monastery to enjoy a patrimony which fell to him by the death of his brothers; that patrimony he appears to have dissipated; afterwards "he became a notable pirate, and had done in his days much mischief to the Englishmen."

* Holinshed, ii. 325. † Ibid. 322.

The English government received timely intelligence of this expected succour to the enemy; and, accordingly, Philip de Albany and John Marshal were appointed to collect the power of the Cinque Ports, and guard the seas against them. With the aid of Hubert de Burgh, earl of Kent, then residing in the castle of Dover, they had not yet mustered more than forty vessels, great and small, on St. Bartholomew's day, when the French sailed, meaning to go up the Thames, and make for London. Not deterred by the inferiority of their forces, the English commanders put to sea, and encountered them; then gained the weather-gage, and, "by tilting at them with the iron beaks of their galleys, sunk several of the transports with all on board. They availed themselves of the wind also to try, with success, a new and singular mode of annoyance; for, having provided a number of vessels on their decks, filled with unslaked lime, and pouring water into them when they were at just distance, and in a favourable position, the smoke was driven into the enemies' faces *," so as to disable them from defending themselves, while the archers and cross-bowmen aimed their destructive weapons with dreadful effect. Eustace, the monk, was found, after long search, hid in the hold of one of the captured ships: he offered a large sum for his ransom, so he might have his life spared, and offered also to enter into the service of the English king; but as he had rendered himself singularly odious, Richard, a bastard son of king John, killed him, and sent his head to young Henry as a brotherly offering, and as a proof of their important victory. Louis was so disheartened by this reverse, that he was glad to make peace upon such terms as were proposed to him; and receiving 15,000 marks for the release of

* Charnock, i. 332. Campbell's account (i. 117.) is, that they laid heaps of lime upon the deck, which, the wind blowing fresh, drove in the faces of their enemies and in a manner blinded them. Neither of the writers give their authority, and Holinshed mentions no such stratagem. I have read elsewhere of throwing lime in this manner. In one of Cœur de Lion's battles in Palestine, the Saracens, when closely pressed, took advantage of the wind, and, occupying some hills of loose sand, stirred it about like dust, and blinded their enemies.

the hostages whom the barons, who invited him, had put into his hands, he gave up such strong-holds as were in his possession, and returned to France.

A remarkable instance occurred some fifteen years afterwards of the feeling with which the people regarded this naval victory, that in its immediate consequences had delivered the country from the presence of a foreign foe. In the course of the civil commotions, by which the reign of Henry III. was disturbed, Hubert de Burgh became an object of persecution to the then prevailing faction; and being forcibly taken from the sanctuary, in which he had sought for protection, at Brentwood, a smith was sent for to make fetters for him. But when the smith understood that it was for Hubert, earl of Kent, he was called upon to perform this ignominious office, he refused to do it, uttering, says Speed *, such words (if Matthew Paris do not poetise) as will show that honourable thoughts are sometimes found in the hearts of men whose fortunes are far from honour. For having first drawn a deep sigh, he said, "Do with me what ye please, and God have mercy on my soul; but as the Lord liveth, I will never make iron shackles for him, but will rather die the worst death that is. Is not this that Hubert who restored England to England? He who faithfully and constantly served John in Gascony, Normandy, and elsewhere, . . whose high courage, when he was reduced to eat horse-flesh, even the enemy admired? He who so long defended Dover Castle, the key of England, against all the strong sieges of the French, and by vanquishing them at sea brought safety to the kingdom? God be judge between him and you for using him so unjustly and inhumanly!" It is to be regretted that this man's name has not been preserved; none of his contemporaries deserved a more honourable remembrance. It was at the risk of his life that he thus obeyed the impulse of an honest heart; and Hubert must have felt a prouder and worthier gratification at this brave testimony to his services than

* Page 517.

the largest grant could ever have given him, with which he was rewarded in the days of his prosperity.

The next maritime event that our chroniclers have recorded is of a more extraordinary nature, . . a great battle among the fishes of the sea, on the coast of England, " so that there were eleven whales or thirlepools cast on land, besides other huge and monstrous fishes, which appeared to be dead of some hurts. And one of those mighty fishes, coming into the Thames alive, was pursued by the fishers, and could scarce pass through the arches of London bridge; at length, with darts and other such weapons, they slew him before the king's manor at Mortlake."* Our ancestors were as careful to report wonders as they were prone to magnify them: but, among the things which have been thus recorded, there are not a few that, having long been discredited in the progress of incredulity, the progress of knowledge has enabled us to understand and believe. Such is the fact recorded thus, by Holinshed †, in his chronicle of this reign. " On the even of the circumcision of our Lord, in the night season, whilst the air was most clear and bright, with shining stars, the moon being eight days' old, there appeared in the element the perfect form and likeness of a mighty great ship; which was first seen of certain monks of St. Albans, who, remaining at St. Amphibalus, were got up to behold by the stars if it were time for them to go to mattins; but, perceiving that strange sight, they called up such of their acquaintance as lodged near at hand to view the same. At length it seemed as the boards and joints thereof had gone in sunder, and so it vanished away." Sailors who had seen or heard of the Flying Dutchman would at no time have questioned the truth of this relation: they who have studied the aërial phenomena of optics will as readily believe it now.

A.D. 1254.

About the same time certain ships were " driven by force of wind and weather into certain havens on the north coast of England towards Berwick; which ships

* Holinshed, i. 390. † Ibid. ii. 430.

were of a very strange form and fashion, but mighty and strong. The men that were aboard were of some far country, for their language was unknown, and not understandable to any that could be brought to talk with them. The fraught and ballast of the ships was armour and weapons, as habergeons, helmets, spears, bows, arrows, crossbows, and darts, with great stores of victuals. There lay, also, without the havens, on the coast, diverse other ships of like form, mold, and fashion. Those that were driven into the havens were stayed for a time by the bailiffs of the ports; but, finally, when it could not be known what they were, nor from whence they came, they were licensed to depart without loss or harm in body or goods."* It is not easy to understand by what circumstance ships from any Finnish or Slavonic ports could have been blown to the coast of Northumberland, and still less credible is it that they should have come from the White Sea. The probable solution is, that the ports to which these strangers were driven were so little frequented, that French and Flemish were the only foreign languages in any degree known there, and perhaps not those. Norway was then at war with Denmark; and it may possibly have been a Norwegian fleet, prepared for war, but evidently with no piratical intention. What piracy was carried on at that time seems to have been by Irish, and perhaps Welsh freebooters: for there was an agreement between Henry III. and his vassal Olave, king of Man and of the islands, that the vassal king was, at his own cost, to guard the English and Irish coasts on those seas against all hurt† as far as was in his power; for which service he was to receive annually, from Ireland, forty marks, a hundred measures‡ of wheat, and five barrels of wine.§

In the year 1238 an attempt was made to murder king Henry III. at Woodstock in his bed. The assas-

* Holinshed, ii. 431.

† "Ne dampnum prædictis terris nostris,—pro posse suo, per mare in costeris illis possit evenire."

‡ Crannocos.

§ Rymer (last edition), i. 218.

sin, who was a clerk, Clement by name, got in at the window at midnight; and as the king happened that night to lie in another apartment, he sought him up and down in other chambers, "with naked knife in hand," till he was seen by one of the queen's gentlewomen, who was sitting late, and engaged devoutly at her book, by candle light. Her cries awakened the king's servants, and the criminal was apprehended. There could be no doubt of his intention; and whether his apparent madness were real or feigned, he was brought to trial at Coventry, and there having, upon full evidence, been justly condemned, was executed with abominable barbarity.* At his death he declared that he had been suborned to the attempt by William de Marisch, whose father Geoffrey had been recently disappointed in his expectations of sharing in the patrimony of Richard, earl of Pembroke, Strongbow's representative, when that powerful earl marshal had been slain in Ireland. Hearing this, William took to the seas; and taking possession of Lundy Island†, "played the rover," from thence as from a stronghold, that little island being deemed inexpugnable. He continued during four years to do much mischief in the neighbouring seas; at length he was surprised with sixteen of

A.D. 1242.

* "And worthily," says Speed; "for as a vulgar chronicler hereupon saith truly, in wounding and killing a prince the traitor is guilty of homicide, of parricide, of christicide, nay, of deicide." This language might rather have been expected from some old attorney-general than from Ralph Holinshed; but that good old chronicler wrote at a time when Elizabeth's life was in continual danger from such attempts. "These practices of treason, *in summo gradu*," says he, "which cannot be committed without irrecoverable detriment to the whole estate (specially where succession is uncertain), are of an old brewing, though they be never so newly broached. And, truly, if the cursed miscreant which undertaketh an enterprise of this quality had the grace to consider how many murders he committeth by implication, in giving the royal person of the prince a deadly wound, I doubt not, if he were a man, and not a rank devil, he would be weaned from that outrageous villany. And, therefore, a thousand woes light on his heart that shall stretch out his hand, nay, that shall once conceive in thought, a murder so heinous." ii. 385.

† It has just at this time been stated in the newspapers, (Nov. 1832) that lieutenants Denham and Robinson have recently discovered that this island possesses a good roadstead, where a considerable fleet might ride securely in westerly gales. A schoolfellow of mine at Bristol, whose father frequently navigated the Bristol Channel, had passed some days upon this island, where there was then only a solitary habitation; and I well remember that, when listening to his account of it some fifty years ago, I used to look upon him as a sort of Robinson Crusoe.

his companions: they were put to death in London as pirates, he as a traitor; but at his death he utterly denied that he had ever been privy to the attempted murder of the king.*

The French had lost the first fleet that they ever fitted out; and their subsequent efforts at sea had not been fortunate. But the possession of Normandy, which, by favour of the troubles in England, they had conquered from king John, gave them ships and seamen; and, during the turbulent reign of his feeble son, they acquired, for a short time, such a superiority over the naval force of the Cinque-ports, the Bretons and the Calais-men joining with them, that the Cinque-ports were compelled to call upon the government for aid.† The wardens of those ports had adhered faithfully to John in all his reverses; but under Henry III. they took the adverse part, and kept the sea, that no stranger should enter the land to aid the king against the barons.‡ John had requited them for their fidelity, by allowing them to make prize of any vessels which they might choose to look upon as enemies: that practice they continued when they changed their party, and "robbed and spoiled all men that they might take, sparing neither English merchants or others;" and the common fame went, that the barons of the land had good part of the gain thus made.§ Toward the close of this miserable reign, when, through the courage and ability of his son prince Edward, the king had gained the ascendency over a set of nobles who would have reduced the government to a condition like that of Poland, some loyal prisoners in Dover Castle, encouraged

* Holinshed, ii. 385. 398. Speed, 523. † Holinshed, ii. 398.

‡ Fabyan, 353.

§ Fabyan, 356. An agreement between them and the governors of the realm was made this same year, during the king's absence, in which they took upon themselves to guard the coast and the sea against the king's enemies: the governors engaged to use their endeavours, on the king's return, for prevailing on him to declare, by his letters patent, that this should in no ways prejudice their liberties; and they bound themselves not to offend against the king's liege subjects, nor any who had his safe conduct. (Rymer, i. 250.) This, as usual in factious times, was arming men in the king's name against the king's cause.

by the tidings which reached them in their captivity, got possession of a tower within the castle-walls, and defended themselves against their keepers till the king and prince Edward came to their deliverance. The garrison were then glad to obtain honourable conditions for themselves; and Edward proceeded along the coast, punishing some of the inhabitants within the precincts of the Cinque-ports, putting others in fear, and receiving them into the king's peace. Winchelsea alone resisted him; but he forced the town, "in which entry much guilty blood was spilt," though the multitude, by his command, were spared. Thus were the seas made quiet; but this was not effected without some compromise, and a condition to which so able a prince as Edward would never have consented if the government had been firmly established. It might be fitting as well as necessary that all their former privileges should be confirmed to them, because those privileges were intended not merely for their own but for the public good. But when it was granted "that if any man, English or other, would sue for restitution of goods by them before taken, or for the death of any of their friends before slain," all such complaints should be sued in their courts and there determined, there must have been the confidence of strength in the party that made so iniquitous a demand, and the consciousness of weakness in that which consented to it. "The common fame at that day ran, that the wardens of the Cinque-ports had the dominion of the sea, wherefore the king was fain to follow their pleasure." * This was a most disgraceful and dangerous example; for they had seized every ship they met, and thrown the crews overboard, English and foreigners alike, "murdering," says a contemporary †, "all who brought necessary commodities to this country, without distinction, so that the price of all imported articles was grievously enhanced, the people greatly distressed thereby, and the merchants ruined." The most

A.D. 1266.

* Fabyan, 361. Hollinshed, ii. 469.
† Thos. Wykes, quoted by Henry, iv. 467.

perilous lesson that has ever been taught to sinful man is, that strength may secure impunity in this world for any wickedness.

Even in this reign, when national interests seemed in other things to be little regarded, Henry evinced a lively concern for the maritime strength of his dominions. He had given the Isle of Oleron as an appanage to his son prince Edward, expressly, however, specifying in the grant that it was not to be separated from the crown. Edward thoughtlessly made a grant of it to his uncle Guy de Lusignan; but the king compelled him to revoke the grant, as having been made without consideration of this prohibitory condition; and the islanders, whose old and tried fidelity was highly praised, were instructed not to admit any governor unless he were sent by the king or his son.*

The Flemings, who were then the most industrious of European nations, found themselves inconvenienced by the feudal relations of their earl to the crown of France, when that kingdom was at war with England; for in that case their great and gainful trade with this country was interrupted. They represented, therefore, to the English government that this evil ought to be no necessary consequence of any dispute between England and France; and they requested that, for the benefit of both parties, the Flemish merchants might be allowed to carry on their trade as usual, so long as Flanders itself took no other part in the war than what the earl was called upon by reason of his homage to perform; and to this reasonable application England reasonably consented.† In later times the Dutch are said to have carried this principle so far as to have sold gunpowder to the people with whom they were actually engaged in hostilities. This, which may be deemed magnanimous or mean according as we regard the act or the motive, is an extreme case; but certainly whatever lessens the amount of private and individual evil which war brings

A.D. 1240.

* Rymer, i. 374. 378. 404. † Marchantius, 232. Sueyro, i. 283.

with it is to be desired. Let us hope that a time will come when trade with an enemy's country, which has been permitted under the system of licenses, may be carried on by a humane and just agreement; that peace or war may in this respect make no difference to those who are inoffensively pursuing their business on the seas; and that the capture of a merchant ship may be considered to be as little consistent with the honourable spirit in which war ought ever to be conducted, as the plunder of a defenceless town.

The resources and the naval strength of England had suffered so much during Henry III.'s reign, that when prince Edward, after he had restored the authority of the crown, and something like order to the land, embarked with one of his brothers for the holy war, the force with which he sailed consisted only of thirteen ships * and 1000 men: but he took with him a name which he had already rendered renowned; and the high reputation which Richard Cœur de Lion had won in the East for English valour was not diminished by his conduct. Some danger of interruption on the seas, which at that time could have been from no foreign enemy, was apprehended, when on his return after his father's death he was about to cross from Gascony; for the constable of Dover Castle, as warden of the Cinque-ports, was written to, to provide ships and galleys for the king's passage, and was instructed secretly to apprise the king's best and trustiest friends in those ports, that they should cautiously make themselves ready for this service; and the constable was exhorted to use circumspection as well as diligence in this matter.† His return was celebrated with such joy as had been felt at no former accession; for it was known that the crown had passed from a weak head to a worthy one, the sceptre from a feeble to a vigorous hand. He was received in London "with all the demonstrations of loyal affection that the Londoners could devise, or that his own heart could have desired. The streets were hung

A.D. 127·

* Campbell, i. 121.

† Rymer, i. part ii. 504.

with rich cloths of silk, arras, and tapestry: the aldermen and burgesses of the city threw out of their windows handfuls of gold and silver, to signify the great gladness which they had conceived of his safe return: the conduits ran plentifully with white wine and red, that every one might drink his fill." About a fortnight afterwards he and his queen Eleanor (one of the best and worthiest with whom ever king was blessed, and who had the rare happiness in that station of being loved as she deserved,) were crowned in Westminster Abbey, which had been almost re-edified by his father. There were present at the ceremony the king of Scotland and the earl of Britanny, with their wives, who were sisters to king Edward, and the queen-mother donna Juana, widow of king Ferdinand of Castile; and at this coronation 500 great horses were, with a sort of barbarous magnificence, turned loose among the crowd for any who could catch them, by the Scotch king and the English barons, as they and their retinue alighted.*

Edward I. has not in these days the sympathy of any generous mind with him in his Welsh wars, justifiable as the conquest seemed in those ages, and beneficial as it has eventually proved to Wales as well as England; but the manner in which he conducted it gave fresh proof of his great ability. In his first campaign the ships which the Cinque-ports furnished behaved so well, that a new charter of liberties was granted to those ports, in acknowledgment of their services to his predecessors, and specially for what they now rendered in Wales. This charter confirmed to them all the privileges to which they had been entitled from the time of Edward the Confessor, and conceded large exemptions † from ordinary imposts, as also from the law concerning ward-

* Holinshed, ii. 479. Speed, 543.

† The clause is a rich specimen of law Latin:—"Ita quod quieti sint de omni theolonio, et omni consuetudine; videlicet, ab omni bastagio, tallagio, passagio, caryagio, rivagio, sponsagio, et omni wrecco, et de tota vendicione, achato et rechato suo, per totam terram et potestatem nostram cum soccaet et sacca, et thol, et them; et quod habeant infangenethef, et quod sint wreccfry et wytefry, et lestagefry, et lonetopfry, et quod habeant den et strond apud Gernemouth.

ships and marriage, which was then a recent enactment, and one of the most oppressive that ever obtained in this kingdom; for this they were bound to serve, at the king's summons, with fifty-seven ships, for fifteen days, at their own cost.* When the war was renewed, 4000 quarrels were ordered for the use of this fleet†, the cross-bow being then in distant combat what the musket has since been. One of the king's first measures then was to occupy the Isle of Anglesea, from whence the Welsh used to draw supplies of food, and whither they sometimes retired for refuge. The ships of the Cinque-ports performed this service for him the more easily, because the chief persons in the island, pursuant to the oath which they had taken at the last peace, did not act against them. It was now desirable to establish a communication with the main land, either for the purpose of acting upon the rear of the Welsh army, or of combining operations with that part of his own which was then in the heart of the enemy's country. With this view he laid down a bridge of boats in the narrowest part of the Menai Straits, from the point of land called Mod-y-down, nearly opposite to Bangor: the platform which he raised upon it was wide enough for threescore men to pass abreast. Seeing this, the Welsh threw up entrenchments on their side, to obstruct the work in its progress, to check the advance of the English when it should be finished, and to secure the passage into their own mountains. Before it was completed, a party of English, with some of the Gascon lords, and a body of Spaniards who were then in Edward's service, crossed where the water was low enough for them to make their way from the termination of the bridge to the shore. Richard ap Walwyn, who commanded the Welsh, let them advance without opposition, to reconnoitre his works at the foot of the mountain; but when the tide came in, and intercepted their retreat, he rushed down upon them with a very superior force, and drove them into the water: many were slain, and many, by reason of the weight of

A.D. 1282.

* Rymer, i. part ii. 558. † Ibid. 604.

their armour, were drowned in endeavouring to regain the bridge. Thirteen knights, seventeen esquires, and 200 foot soldiers fell, according to the English account; 1000 according to the Welsh. Among them was "that famous knight sir Lucas de Thania," who was the leader of the foreign troops, sir William Lindsey, Robert Clifford, and William de la Zouch. Sir William Latimer, who commanded the English, recovered the bridge by the stoutness of his horse.* Edward was at Aberconway at the time, . . for no such imprudence would have been committed had he been present; but this loss, and the inconvenience which the passage of those straits occasioned, made him conceive the intention of constructing a stone bridge there. The architects whom he consulted made an unfavourable report, saying that the bottom was doubtful, and the sea at times raging and stormy. Edward was one of those men who think every thing practicable that they know to be greatly needed, and who, in the strength of that persuasion, overcome difficulties which to others would be insuperable: he would have made the attempt, if the inhabitants of Arvon had not petitioned against it, and still more because his attention was engrossed by other schemes of ambition, and objects of more pressing importance.† But he would have failed in it; for what he proposed was more than modern engineers have ventured to undertake. It was reserved for Telford, in our own days, to suspend over those straits, and at the very point where Edward laid his floating bridge, an iron one in the air, which is at once the most stupendous and the most beautiful work of its kind that the world has ever seen.

A.D. 1293. The seas were very insecure during this reign: France had now raised a naval force; and the French, on one part, taking advantage of this, and the English, on the other, of the jealousy which it caused, enormities were committed on both sides, . . in the consequence of which the governments were involved. Six ships of war

* Holinshed, ii. 485. Warrington's Hist of Wales, ii. 256—258.
† Beauties of England and Wales, xvii. 297.

were fitted out by England, and sent to Bourdeaux for the defence of the coast of Gascony. Two of these, as they sailed along the coast of Normandy, fearing no hurt, were assailed by the Norman fleet, and taken, and several of the men hanged.* With whatever provocation this may have been done, or with whatever pretext, the act itself was so outrageous, that the lord Robert Tiptoft, who then commanded the English fleet, collected the force under his orders, and sailed for Normandy, with the intention of revenging himself upon any Norman ships that he might fall in with. Meeting with none, he entered the mouth of the Seine, attacked the vessels that lay at anchor there, and captured six, having slain many of the men; and then returning to sea with his prizes, he cast anchor not far from the land, in hope that the French might be provoked to come forth, and give him battle. While he lay there, in this vain expectation, a fleet of Normans came that way, on their return from Gascony, freighted with wine: they were in great strength, and had gone in boastful defiance of the English; but they were now attacked and captured, with little difficulty, it is said, yet with the slaughter of nearly a third part of their whole force, and Tiptoft carried them to England. Thus far all had been done "rashly between the Englishmen and the Normans, without any commission of their princes." France now "prepared a navy, and furnished it with soldiers to encounter the English." Messengers the while went to and fro, the one party complaining of truce-breaking, the other requiring restitution of ships and property violently taken; and there might have been good hope of agreement, if Charles earl of Valois, the French king's brother, "being of a hot nature, and desirous of revenge, had not stirred up his brother to seek revengement by force of arms." Both fleets were now equally incensed: the French went forth to seek the English, and these, "minding not to detract the battle, sharply encountered their enemies at a certain place betwixt England and Normandy, where they had laid a great

empty ship at anchor, to give token where they meant to join." The English had Irish and Hollanders with them; with the French there were Flemings and Genoese. It was at first a doubtful and a bloody fight; neither the number nor the loss on either side are stated; but in the end the French were "put to the chase, and scattered abroad."*

A.D. 1294. The two nations were now at war; and the king of England "caused three several fleets to be prepared, and appointed to them three sundry admirals, for the better keeping of the seas: to them of Yarmouth and other of those parts he assigned the lord John Botetourt; to them of the Cinque-ports, William de Leyborne; and to them of the west country and the Irishmen, he appointed a valiant knight of Ireland as their chieftain." One of these fleets sailed from Portsmouth; and though baffled for a while by contrary winds, ascended the Garonne at last, and captured several vessels.† Instructions were given by the English government that the armed force of the country should be held in readiness every where along the English coast in case of invasion. And because, it was said, there might be no little danger at that time from Normans or other foreign religioners settled upon the coast, or upon any navigable rivers which communicated with it, such foreigners were to be removed into the interior, and all ships and boats belonging to them to be drawn ashore, and deprived of their rudders and rigging.‡ Treason was indeed busily at work; but it was a knight not a monk who was the traitor. Sir Thomas Turberville, "a man of singular and approved valiancy," and hitherto of unsuspected fidelity, had been taken prisoner by the French in Gascony, and "to save his life, and deliver himself out of captivity," engaged to use his endeavours for raising a revolt in Wales, and also for betraying the English fleet: this latter object he was to bring about by getting the command, which he doubted not to ob-

* Holinshed, ii. 500, 501. † Holinshed, 504.
‡ Rymer, i. part ii. 826.

tain, through his own high character and the influence of his friends. King Edward, though he had received him very courteously; but, "as God would have it, he denied that suit."

The French fleet, looking for the success of this complot, put to sea: it consisted, what with galleys and other ships, of 300 sail; for the French king had obtained vessels both from Marseilles and Genoa. They approached the coast, and lay at anchor off it for some days, expecting that the English fleet would come forth to encounter them, and that Turberville would betray it into their hands. But when their patience was wearied out, they landed certain persons who knew the country, that they might obtain intelligence, and discover the cause of his delay. These persons were apprehended; and, as they could give no satisfactory account of themselves, they were executed as spies. They sent also five galleys to reconnoitre the coast: one of these came to Hythe, and, by a stratagem of the English, who feigned to take flight into the interior, the crew were tempted to land, as to an easy prize; the English then surprised them, slew the whole party, and burnt the galley. Incensed at this, the French commander sailed straight for Dover, landed there, and began to sack the priory and the town. "There were not many of the men of Dover slain: for they escaped by swift flight at the first entry made by the Frenchmen: but of women and children there died a great number; for the enemies spared none." The flight of the men, however, was not in mere baseness: they raised the country on every side; and great numbers having collected, came to Dover towards evening; and, attacking such Frenchmen as were prowling in quest of further prey, "slew them down in sundry places." The French commander, who had been busy all the day in plundering, seeing that his people were running to the sea-side, got straightway to his ships, with such pillage as could be embarked in haste; but not before he had set fire to the town, which was in part consumed. Many who had ventured into the

country for spoil, and could not reach the shore in time, were slain wherever they were found: some of them hid themselves in the corn-fields; and when they were discovered, they were slaughtered like wild beasts by the country people. The whole loss of the enemy was little less than 800. The people of Dover had to regret an old Benedictine, Thomas by name, who, when his brethren took flight, could not, by any persuasions, be induced to leave his convent, nor, by any threats, to discover its treasures when the French came to plunder it. The plunderers, therefore, killed him; and for this martyrdom, as it was deemed, and for his other virtues, he was held in such estimation, that miracles were performed in his honour, through the faith of his believers or the fraud of his fraternity.* But this attempt at setting up a St. Thomas of Dover failed; St. Thomas of Canterbury was too near a neighbour. Turberville's treason was soon afterwards disclosed by his secretary, through whom his correspondence with the French was carried on: he attempted to escape, but was pursued and taken; and having been brought to trial, and convicted, was punished with death.

A.D. 1297.

The English, on their part, were not more fortunate in an expedition of far greater magnitude; and their failure was more disgraceful, because, though there was no default of courage, it was mainly attributable to their own gross misconduct. Edward, having entered into an alliance against France with the earl of Flanders, embarked with an English force for that country, and landed near Sluys. But no sooner had he disembarked, than, "through old envy and malice depending between the mariners of the Cinque-ports and those of Yarmouth and other quarters," an ill-suppressed enmity broke out; and, in defiance of the king's commands and in contempt of his presence, the two parties fought on the water in such earnest sort, that, on the Yarmouth side, there were five-

* Grafton, i. 290. Holinshed, ii. 509. Bzovius, xiii. 1295., from the MS. Vatic. de Rebus Anglicis.

and-twenty ships burnt and destroyed; and three of the largest vessels, part of the king's treasure being in one of them, "were tolled forth into the high sea, and quite conveyed away." This daring defiance of authority augured ill for the campaign in which Edward was engaged; and, in fact, his men were little more subordinate ashore than they had shown themselves afloat. A French force occupied Bruges, and thought to have taken the English fleet, which lay in the harbour of Damme; but they had timely intelligence, and put to sea. The enemy then began to fortify Bruges and Damme. The English and their allies drove them from the latter place with considerable loss; and Bruges also, it was thought, might have been recovered, if the English and Flemings had not fallen at strife and fought together "about the division of the prey." This was not the worst: the conduct of the English at Ghent, where Edward passed great part of the winter, so exasperated the townsmen, that more than 700 of them were slain in a sudden tumult; and Edward himself is said to have been beholden for his life to the protection of a knight of Flanders. The ill-will which was thus occasioned, and increased by the outrages of the English footmen, . . "for they one day plundered the town of Damme, and slew as many as 200 persons, who had submitted to the king on his arrival, . . "became, at length, so formidable, notwithstanding the efforts of Edward, on the one part, to curb the insolence of his troops, and of the earl of Flanders, on the other, to restrain the indignation of his people, that this, more than any other cause, occasioned the failure of the expedition; and the king took the first pretext for returning to England.*

The nearer concerns of Wales and Scotland occupied Edward too much to allow him either leisure or means for prosecuting the war with France: he concluded it by a treaty, one article of which contracted for the marriage of his eldest son, Edward of Caernarvon, with the

* Holinshed, ii. 525. 528.

French princess Isabella. No royal marriage ever afforded sadder or more fertile subject for tragedy and for history than this. Edward I. has been reproached, and will be through all ages, for his treatment of Wallace and of the Welsh prince David: it would have been easier for him, .. I will not say to justify, .. but to excuse himself, in both those cases, by the opinions and feelings of that age, than for entering into this fatal contract. Three years before, he had proposed a marriage between this his eldest son, then ten years of age, and Philippa, the youngest daughter of Guy earl of Flanders. The proposal was gladly accepted by the earl, with the advice of his best friends: the portion was agreed upon, the writings made, and lands in England appointed for the bride's dowry. Whatever views of policy there may have been on the king of England's part in soliciting this matrimonial alliance, there was none on the earl's;.. he was an easy, unambitious old man, desirous only of keeping his people in peace, and living in quietness. France, however, regarded it with extreme jealousy; for it was already a state maxim with that most far-sighted and unscrupulous of all governments, to prevent any union of interests between Flanders and England; and Philip the Fair* having determined, by any means, to prevent this marriage, had recourse to the basest. He invited the earl, in terms of apparent friendliness, to come and advise with him upon matters of great importance; and the earl, accordingly, suspecting no ill, went to him at Corbeil, and took his countess with him. He was received with reproaches and menaces. By the laws of France, the king told him, no vassal of that crown, how great soever, might marry any of his children out of the realm without the king's license; and if any one ventured to do so, his lands were forfeited. The astonished earl replied, that he had never failed, nor intended to fail, in his obedience; that, in desiring an advantageous marriage for his daughter, he had no thought of offending any

* "Corpore quidem formosus, sed animo scelestus et fœdus," says Bzovius, tom. xiii. 996.

one; nor had he ever heard but that marriages were free. He mentioned well-known instances in proof that they were so. He offered, if his faith were doubted, to give such security as might be required; but he trusted in the king's royal clemency, that no violence would be offered him; and this with the more reason, because he had come into France upon the king's invitation, and in full confidence of his good will: finally, he appealed to the judgement of the peers. But men who have resolved to act iniquitously are never to be moved from their purpose by force of reason. Guy and his countess were sent prisoners to the tower of the Louvre, and their retinue were cast into prison.*

More honour was found in the peers of France than in the king. They pronounced against this injurious detention; and their decision being aided by the intercession of the pope's legates at that time in France, the prisoners were released, but with this condition,..that the earl should make no league with England, and that he should deliver up his daughter as a hostage. That daughter, accordingly, was brought to Paris; and there, with the greatest grief†, her parents left her. When the earl had returned to his own dominions, he appealed to the pope against this injustice; and the pope, by a legate deputed for the purpose, called upon Philip to deliver up his innocent hostage, or appear before the consistory of cardinals to justify his conduct: he was threatened with excommunication if he refused. The papal authority has ever been found far more efficient for evil than for good: and the reason is, that whenever evil is to be done, there is always some faction ready to promote it with all their soul and with all their strength; but the passions are never brought into action on behalf of reason and justice. Philip treated both the admonition and the menaces of the legate with contumacious

* "Teniendo ya desde entonces aquella nacion por una de sus maximas de estado, el separar las fuerzas de Ingleses y Flamencos; demas de la invidia con que miravan los grandes de Francia las riquezas que con el commercio adqueria esta provincia." — *Sueyro*, i. 329.

† "Cum ingenti dolore." — *Bzovius*. "Con grandes lagrimas y sentimientos." — *Sueyro*.

contempt: matters of state and profane affairs, he said, were not within the pope's jurisdiction. When the earl found that there was no hope of obtaining the deliverance of his daughter by this means, he listened to the solicitations of Edward, of the emperor Adolphus, the duke of Austria, and other inferior states, and entered into a league against France. Edward engaged to assist him with money, as well as with an army. In case the projected marriage should be frustrated by Philippa's continued detention, or by her death, the prince of Wales was to marry her sister in her stead: and the king and the earl bound themselves personally, by oath upon the Gospels, to make neither peace or truce with France, unless it were conjointly, not even though the emperor or the pope should require it.* This treaty being concluded, the earl sent ambassadors to demand the liberation of his daughter, . . and if this were refused, to renounce his fealty, and declare war: at the same time Philip sent to summon him, as his vassal, to surrender himself prisoner at the Chastelet. Both embassies were alike fruitless, and war ensued. The issue of Edward's campaign in Flanders has been just related: he found it necessary to return to his own country, because of the dislike which the English manifested for this war, and because of the resistance to which the Scotch had been roused by Wallace. But the affair at Ghent had produced ill blood between the English and the Flemings; and Edward, in whom all other considerations were subordinate to those of his ambitious policy, thought that a close alliance with France would secure him against the troubles which that power might otherwise excite or foment in his recent conquests, . . Wales and Scotland. He entered, therefore, into a treaty with Philip; engaged to marry Philip's sister himself, and that the prince of Wales, breaking the contract with Philippa, should marry the king of France's daughter. The oath by which he was bound to the earl of Flanders was

* Rymer, i. part ii. 850. 852.

easily dispensed with; and, when such dispensations can be procured, and are thought valid, the obligations of honour and conscience are worth nothing.* Edward was bound in both to have obtained the deliverance of Philippa, and to have restored her to her parents.

The fate of the earl and of his much-injured daughter may be related in few words. The defeat of his other allies at Bovines, and the rebellious discontent of his subjects because of the burdens imposed upon them, left him at the mercy of a merciless enemy. Treachery was again used against him: he was assured that he might put himself without danger into Philip's hands, and that he had no alternative: he did so, .. for he had none; and he was thrown into strict confinement. The French took possession of Flanders: they were received as deliverers by a people, then the most mutable and turbulent, as well as the most industrious, in Europe. They behaved with such intolerable insolence and tyranny, that the Flemings rose against them, and France received, at Groeninghe, one of the most signal defeats recorded in her history. After four years' imprisonment, Guy was released, during a truce, upon condition of his returning to prison, unless that truce should be terminated by a peace, which it was thought his presence might promote. The negotiation failed; and the honourable old man, on his return, was treated with the same rigour as before.† He died soon afterwards in that confinement, being more than eighty years of age. Peace, after a most obstinate and bloody contest, was concluded in the year following; and his body, which had been embalmed and closed in lead, was then delivered up, with the prisoners who were in the king's hands, .. all but Philippa! The same motives which had caused the French king to seize upon this victim, induced him still to detain her; but, in a little time, she was released by death. Grief for her own wrongs; for the loss of her mother, who died during her captivity;

* Sueyro, i. 344.

† "No ablandò — la puntualidad de Guido el animo endurecido del Rey, pues usò con el viejo ya decrepito del mismo rigor." — *Sueyro*, i. 374.

and for her father's sufferings; brought this victim of remorseless policy to an untimely grave. There were some who believed that poison had been administered to her by the queen of France, whose hatred of the Flemings even exceeded her husband's. But of this there is neither proof nor probability: the story is tragical enough without such a catastrophe; the cruelty was quite as great, . . the crime but little less. About two years after her death, Edward of Caernarvon was married to Philip's daughter Isabel,* that "she-wolf of France," whose infamy is recorded in everlasting verse; and never was any royal marriage so prolific of evil to two nations, for from that marriage the claims of the Plantagenets to the crown of France originated, and the wars which arose in pursuance of that claim produced that deep and rooted enmity between France and England which after the lapse of four centuries, continues to be felt and manifested upon all seas and shores.†

By an article of the treaty wherein this iniquitous marriage was one of the stipulations, the two kings bound themselves to aid each other against any who should go about to interrupt them in the franchises, liberties, rights, or customs of them and their subjects; and this gave occasion to an enquiry in which the king of England's sovereignty of the seas was on the one hand asserted, and recognised on the other. The case was this. The war between France and Flanders continuing after England had withdrawn from it, the French king sent a large fleet to sea, under the command of Reyner Grimbaldi‡, a Genoese noble, to whom he gave the title of admiral. Grimbaldi, under colour of that commission, captured several ships of different nations, bound to the Flemish ports: upon this, com-

* Sueyro acknowledges a righteous judgment here: — "Este casamiento, hecho con el mayor aparato y alegria, fue el mas dañoso a Francia, pues por el pretenden aun los Ingleses la succession della, sobre que se peleò y derramò tanta sangre. Permitiolo nuestro Señor por sus justos juyzios, para que se viesse la incertidumbre de los humanos, y quanto mejor les estuviera à los Franceses el no haver impedido el matrimonio del mismo Eduardo acordado con Phelipa." i. 387.

† Sueyro, i. 346. 370. 374. 385.

‡ Grimbaltz, our writers call him.

plaints were made both to the kings of England and France, and they jointly appointed commissioners to hear and determine the case. The complaint was laid before these commissioners in the names of the procurators of the prelates and nobles, and of the admiral of the English seas, and of the communities of cities and towns, and of the merchants, mariners, strangers resident, and all others belonging to the kingdom of England, and other territories subject to the king of England; and likewise in the name of the inhabitants of other maritime countries, such as Genoa, Catalonia, Spain, Germany, Zeeland, Holland, Frizeland, Denmark, Norway, and many other places of the empire. It set forth that the kings of England had, for so long time that there was no memory to the contrary thereof, been, by right of that kingdom, in peaceable possession of the sovereignty * of the English seas, and of the isles therein, with power of ordaining and establishing laws, statutes, and prohibitions of arms, and of ships otherwise furnished than merchantmen used to be; and of taking security and safeguard in all cases where need might be; and of ordering all things necessary for the maintenance of peace, right, and equity among all manner of people, as well of other dominions as their own, passing through the said seas, by the sovereign guard thereof, and by all manner of cognisance of parties, high and low, according to the said laws, statutes, ordinances, and prohibitions, and all other things which to the exercise of their sovereignty in these seas appertained. This right they complained had been invaded by Messire Reyner Grimbaldi, master of the navy of the king of France, who, calling himself admiral of the said seas, had, after the peace made with England, and against the form and force of that alliance, and the intentions of those who made it, wrongfully exercised that office in the English seas; taking the subjects and merchants of the kingdom of England and of other countries,

* "La soveraine seigneurie."

when passing upon the said seas with their goods, and casting them into prison, and by his own judgement and award causing their goods to be delivered, as forfeit and confiscate, to receivers appointed for that purpose in the French king's ports. Grimbaldi, in his answer to this plea, neither disputed the king of England's sovereignty, nor pleaded any power derived to himself from the commission of the king of France; but he argued that there was no contravention of the treaty; King Edward having contracted neither to give aid or assistance, nor suffer it to be given, to the enemies of king Philip, and having issued a prohibition of such practices; all persons, therefore, who after that prohibition relieved the Flemings by merchandize, or in any other way, were to be deemed enemies, of whatever nation they might be; and the treaty itself, in its just interpretation, authorised him to deal with them accordingly. The determination is not known; the pleadings only have been preserved among our own records*; and they were of no inconsiderable importance in times when history, and prescription, and rights, were appealed to on points which must ultimately be decided by the law of the strongest.

A.D. 1280. During this reign it was that England began to take any farther interest in the affairs of the Spanish peninsula, than what had accidentally arisen during the crusades. Edward's first marriage, happy as that marriage was, led to friendly intercourse between the courts of Castile and England; and the queen's brother, Alphonso the Wise, was allowed to engage English shipwrights for his own service, and also to buy or build ships and galleys in the English ports for his wars against the Moors.† There have been many exasperating circumstances to embitter the wars in which Spain and England have been engaged against each other; but at no time has there existed that deep feeling of national enmity which had now taken root in the hearts of the

* Campbell, 126—132.

† Rymer, i. part ii. 580.

French and English people. How strongly Edward I. felt that enmity, appears by a remarkable anecdote relating to his second wife, the lady Margaret, daughter of Philip the Bold of France. The mother's milk disagreed with her first-born son, Thomas of Brotherton *, but he throve upon that of an English nurse; after many trials, the effect always proved the same; and when this was reported to the father, he smiled upon the infant, and said, "God give thee grace, my boy! I see thou art right English in thy nature, and mayest one day show thyself a notable enemy to the French nation!" † The great object of Edward's ambition, being not only a valiant but also a politic prince, was to bring this divided isle into one entire monarchy. The French let no opportunity pass of secretly impeding him in it; and while this unfriendly feeling existed between the governments, a hostile one was ready to manifest itself on any provocation between the people; insomuch that the English ports were instructed to charge all their seamen, when going to a French harbour, to be upon their guard there, and hold their ships always in readiness both for getting out to sea and for defence; and they were enjoined, in all the necessary dealings that they might have on shore, to go so prepared that they might be able, both to defend themselves in case of need, and to make good their retreat to their vessels.‡

A.D. 1301.

The manners of every maritime nation, greatly advanced as they were beyond the inland ones, were not yet so far mitigated at this time, but that acts of outrage and piracy were frequently committed, to the constant danger of embroiling governments when most amicably inclined towards each other. Reprisals were provoked by wrongs; and these, falling upon the innocent, and being, therefore, not less wrongful in themselves, called forth fresh acts of violence; summary vengeance often-

* So called from his birthplace, near Pontefract.
† Joshua Barnes's Hist. of Edward III. 44. Walsingham quoted.
‡ Rymer, i. part ii. 936.

times preventing or embarrassing the slow course of equitable examination upon which the respective governments had conjointly entered.* Piracies were frequent. An English ship, taken by pirates, and retaken from them by the Portugueze, was carried into Lisbon; and when it had been carefully preserved there two whole years for its owners, king Diniz applied to the English government to take measures for discovering to whom it belonged, . . an early and honourable instance of Portugueze probity.† The Spaniards are accused, at this time, of sailing under Portugueze colours, and attacking English ships, with the view of setting the two countries at variance.‡ Piracy was sometimes carried on more audaciously: a piratical squadron from the ports of Biscay and Asturias carried off three ships from Southampton, and plundered the house of a brave man who endeavoured to oppose them; they killed one of his near kinsmen, and he himself hardly escaped with life from their hands. Two and twenty sail from Calais attacked four of our merchantmen close to the coast of Kent, and, killing many of the crew, captured one vessel, which was laden with wool for Antwerp, to the value of 2000 marks.§

A.D. 1307.

1308.

These were individual offences which had no political bearing, but which characterise the state of society. They led to more serious consequences when Edward II. was engaged in his disastrous wars in Scotland. At first his complaint was, that a Flemish pirate, manned chiefly by outlaws from Hainault and Holland, infested the northern coast ||, and intercepted the sup-

1310.

* Proofs of this may be found in Rymer, vol. i. part ii. pp. 38. 46—77., and vol. ii. p. 294. There is an atrocious case which occurred in one of the ports of Norway. The sailors of every nation seem in those times to have behaved, where they felt themselves strong enough, with as little regard to probity or humanity as they sometimes show now in the South Seas.

† Rymer, ii. 7.

‡ Ibid. ii. 58.

§ Rymer, ii. 279. A valuable cargo;—when, in another complaint to the king of France, we read of a Yarmouth ship, whose cargo (taken in at Rouen) of woollen and linen cloths, iron, canvass, cables, and *gold and silver*, amounted to forty pounds sterling. Rymer, ii. 40. Gold and silver, however, can only mean the money of which the master and the crew were robbed.

|| Rymer, ii. 118.

plies of his army. But it appeared afterwards that the Scotch drew stores of provisions and arms from the Flemish ports, under favour of that government. John de Botetout, whose station was at Yarmouth, was charged to look out for and intercept thirteen large Scotch * vessels, which were taking in such a cargo at Sluys. Some years later, when this state of things had ended in open war, the Flemings put to death, without mercy, the crews of such ships as fell into their hands; the seaports were officially apprised of this, and instructed to act accordingly. Yet so little resentment did this excite, . . probably, indeed, so little did it exceed the ordinary barbarities with which hostilities were carried on, . . that, in the two succeeding years, the Flemish merchants were allowed, upon the earl's application, to repair to England during the wool-staple, and make their purchases as in time of peace. † The French appear to have entertained wider notions of the rights of war than their more commercial neighbours; for the king of France, upon intelligence that certain Spanish ships, laden with arms and stores for Flanders, with which country he was then at war, had been detained by the constable of Dover, wrote to Edward, desiring that these ships might be confiscated to his, the king of England's, use, and the people on board treated as slaves. ‡ Edward's reply to this extraordinary request was, that he had not been informed of the detention of any such ships in his ports; but that he would cause enquiry to be made, and if they were found, would then do what ought to satisfy the king of France. §

A.D. 1315. 1322. 1323. 1313.

During the Scottish war, the best ships were ordered to be taken for the king's service; thirty from the ports of Norfolk and Suffolk, as many from the line of coast extending from Shoreham to Plymouth, and an indefinite number (probably the same) from Essex and Kent. ||

* *Magne coge* are the original words. (Rymer, ii. 269.) The words *navibus sive cogis* afterwards occur. Ketch is probably the modern word.

† Rymer, ii. 516. 564.

‡ "Tanquam servos et exclavos."—*Rymer*, ii. 281.

§ "Taliter faciemus quod fore debeat vobis gratum." || Rymer, ii. 223.

John Sturmy and Peter Bard were appointed captains and admirals of this fleet, as well over the king's own ships, as of those which he had obtained from the northern countries, and with full power of punishing all offences.* The Scotch had contracted with certain Genoese merchants to supply them with galleys and arms; and the king of England, being apprised of this, complained to the state of Genoa, as a power with which England had always maintained relations of peace and amity, and requested it to interfere.† The naval means of England were not then what they had been in his father's reign; for, in the year ensuing, he found it expedient himself to apply to Genoa for permission to purchase, and arm and man, five galleys there for the Scottish wars.‡ But how anxiously the English government regarded whatever might affect the maritime trade of the country, was shown when an affray took place at Southampton, between the crews of five Venetian galleys, and the townspeople and Isle-of-Wight-men: lives were lost on both sides; the Venetians put to sea; and their countrymen, on reasonable fear of being made to suffer for the guilty, after the too common practice of that age in such disputes, suspended their intercourse with England; till the king invited them to resume it, and with that view granted a pardon to all and any persons of that country who had been concerned in the fray.§

A.D. 1316. — 1324.

When the king found it necessary to engage in war with France, in resentment of the open hostilities which had been commenced against him in Aquitaine, a rigorous ordinance was issued for arresting all French subjects in England, of whatever state, condition, or sex; those who might be of his own or of his queen's household, or entertained in any other family whatsoever, not excepted. Their lands, tenements, goods, and chattels, were to be seized for the king's use; some reasonable allow-

* "Prout ad officium capitanei et amiralli flotæ hujusmodi pertinet in hac parte" — *Rymer*, ii. 244.
† Rymer, ii. 293. ‡ Ibid. ii. 313. § Ibid. ii. 546. 593.

ance being reserved only for the religioners and their attendants.* A subsequent order mitigated this cruelty; an exception being then made for all ecclesiastical persons, and for those who, having wives and children, had long been domesticated here, and thereby were naturalised.† The edict of his father for removing foreign monks or friars from the coast was at this time renewed, because of the mischief they might do by letters, signals, or other means; and their places in the respective convents were to be filled up with English brethren of the same order, with whom, in fact, they exchanged for the time.‡ Considerable loss was inflicted upon France at this time in her "sea-strengths;" the three admirals §, sir John Oturwin, sir Nicholas Kiriel, and sir John de Felta, scoured the narrow seas, with such success, that within a short time they brought into England, as lawful prizes, 120 Norman vessels. ||

When Edward III., through the crimes of his mother, and the successful efforts of her partisans, succeeded too early to his unhappy father's throne ¶, the state of

* Rymer, ii. 570. † "Tanquam indigenæ"—*Rymer*, ii. 638.

‡ "The earl of Surrey, writing to cardinal Wolsey, says that he was spared from burning the priory of Coldstream, 'because the prioress thereof is one of the best and most assured spies that we have in Scotland, for which cause we may not well spare her.'"—*Brayley's Graphic and Historical Illustrator*, p. 183. Ellis's Original Letters, quoted.

§ Sir John Crombwell was, in the year 1324, admiral of the fleet which went out to Gascony. (Rymer, i. 562.) I believe this is the first time that name, which afterwards became so memorable, occurs in our history.

|| Speed, 561. Campbell, i. 134.

¶ "Because many of our historians," says Joshua Barnes, "lay some imputation upon the name of king Edward III., as if he was not wholly innocent of these proceedings against his father, we are to consider the tenderness of his age,—he being not then fourteen years old,—whereby he might very easily be imposed upon by the treacherous subtlety of Mortimer and his accomplices, who were always about him: also we should cast our eyes upon the severity he showed this same Mortimer, when he understood the whole treason. Nor is it a small sign of his innocence as to this point, that he himself lived long and reigned happily, being blest with many dutiful children; and that no other circumstance of his whole life can furnish us with any thing from whence we may suspect that he could be capable of so black and unnatural a treason." p. 3.

The poet May took a farther view than the industrious Joshua, who was dazzled by the splendour of Edward's reign. "The son," he says, "upon

His father's ruins is compelled to rise;
As if by that the envious Destinies
Meant to alloy this Edward's glorious reign,
As loth to suffer England to obtain

affairs seemed to require more wisdom than was likely to be found in his distracted counsels, and more vigour than could be expected from his boyish arm. The war with France,* which had been made one means for bringing about the ruin of the late king, was terminated by a treaty, and peace made with Scotland upon no honourable terms. Neither were of long duration. It was not easy soon to stop those depredations upon the seas which war had licensed; so far, however, as the power of a weak government extended, an end was put to them.* Like every thing else, the naval strength of the kingdom had suffered during the misrule and the internal troubles of the preceding reign; and upon the first enquiry, it was found that the smaller craft belonging to the crown were, for want of care, going fast to decay.† But when Edward, by a resolute act of vengeance against his mother's minion, took the government, at a very early age, into his own hands, he stood in need of all his resources.

A. D. 1327.

Upon the death of king Charles le Beau of France, Edward advanced a title to that kingdom through his mother,.. not in derogation of the Salic law, whereby he acknowledged that his mother (as well as the infant daughter of the deceased king) was excluded; but on the ground that a daughter's son, having no disqualification of sex, was capable of the succession, and ought to be preferred to a nephew, who was the other claimant. The peers of France decided otherwise. Accordingly Philip of Valois succeeded to the throne, and summoned Edward to make his personal appearance before him in France, and there do homage for the dukedom of Aquitaine and the earldom of Ponthieu and

1328.

So great a blessing at the lawful time,
Or such a prince without a public crime;
For which the land must after suffer, by
A rent so made in his posterity."

Reign of Edward III., book i.

May's two historical poems show how completely he had imbibed the manner of his favourite poet Lucan.

* Rymer, ii. part ii. 700.

† Ibid. 698.

Monstreul. His ambassadors found the king at Windsor, and having discharged their bidding, Edward replied, that it was a matter which required advice, and few of his council were then about him; but if they would repair to London, he would there give them such an answer as should be resolved on." At Westminster, accordingly, they were heard before the council, and delivered the king of France's letters, which Edward had refused to receive before. They were then required to withdraw while the business should be debated. Some of the lords were of opinion, that, seeing the crown of France belonged to him in right of queen Isabel, his mother, he ought not to acknowledge any fealty, but openly put forth his claim for what they considered to be evidently his due: the majority, on the other hand, insisted, that it was too early for him to embark in so great and hazardous an enterprise, the enemy being at that time so powerful, the realm at home unsettled, and he himself so young, .. for he was then but in his fifteenth year. The youth of Edward must be his only excuse for consenting to a subterfuge which has been too often repeated, and which exemplifies the loose morality of the papal church. In order that his right and future claim should not be prejudiced by any thing which he might now by his present circumstances be compelled to do, he constituted one of the council his procurator on that part, and by him he protested "openly and expressly before all his council," .. but not before the French ambassadors,* from whom this important part of the proceedings was of course kept secret, .. that for any homage whatsoever to be made to the lord Philip of Valois, then bearing himself as king of France, by king Edward of England, for the dukedom of Aquitaine and the earldom of Ponthieu, he, king Edward, did not, nor would, thereby renounce his hereditary right to the realm of France, nor intend in any way from that same right to derogate; even although letters thereupon should afterwards be signed with either of his scals. And he protested that he should

not make any homage to the said lord Philip of his own free will, but only under the just fear he had of losing the said dukedom and earldom, and because he feared that unless he did this homage, he could not avoid other great dangers and irreparable losses. In confirmation of this, the procurator took for the young king an oath upon his soul, by laying hands upon the holy Gospel, before all the council present.*

The ambassadors were then called in, and the bishop of London, Stephen Gravesend, "a well-spoken man," addressed them in these words: . . . "Lords that be here assembled for the king of France, the king's grace, my sovereign lord, hath heard your words and read the tenour of your letters. Sirs, we say unto you, that we will counsel the king our sovereign lord here present, that he go into France, to see the king your master, his dear cousin, who right lovingly hath invited him; and as touching his faith and homage, he shall do his devoir in every thing that he ought. And, sirs, ye may show the king your master, that within short space the king of England, our master, shall arrive in France, and do all that reason shall require."† The ambassadors were then well entertained, and presented with "many great gifts and jewels." On both sides the Channel this was considered a business of great importance. The king of France, "that he might appear in more pomp, and to the intent that there might be more notable witnesses of the homage there to be done to his own person," as also "to dazzle and awe the mind of the young king with the number and greatness of his friends and allies," invited his cousin John of Luxemburgh, king of Bohemia, and the kings of Navarre and Majorca, to be present. There were present also the dukes of Burgundy, Bourbon, and Lorraine, "with all the peers, earls, barons, and chief lords of France," . . provision being made for 1000 "horse-strangers," besides 600 horse who were expected in the king of England's train. Young Edward, however, had a larger retinue;

* Barnes, 34. † Froissart, chap. xxiv.

for on his part it was considered a matter of policy that there should be a display of the wealth and strength of England. A thousand horse accompanied him, more than forty knights, the chief nobility, and the bishops of London, Winchester, and Lincoln, . . all three "right politic prelates." He was two days on the passage from Dover to Whitsand; and having rested, after so wearisome a crossing, one day at Boulogne, was met at Montreuil by the constable of France, whom Philip had despatched with a good company of lords and knights to welcome him, in his name, with high expressions of respect; "for the French," says the pains-taking historian of this eventful reign, "are a wonderful free and civil people, when they design to do honour to any person." Amiens was the place appointed for the ceremony. There he was welcomed by Philip, the three other kings, the dukes, earls, and barons, and the eleven peers of France (he being himself the twelfth), who were all assembled there, apparently to do him honour, but more truly with the intention of bearing witness to the act of homage. During fifteen days he was entertained with great royalty; many things, meantime, relating to the present business being canvassed and discussed.*

On the day appointed, young Edward was ushered into the cathedral of Amiens, there to perform the ceremony. He wore a long robe of crimson velvet, powdered with leopards of gold; his crown was on his head, his sword by his side, and his spurs of gold on his heels. King Philip sate ready to receive him, on his royal throne, in a robe of violet coloured velvet, powdered with fleur-de-lis of gold, his crown on his head, his sceptre in his hand, with other ensigns of majesty, and with his state attendants. An air of superiority was assumed, which roused the young Plantagenet's blood: he had come prepared to do all that policy should have required, or courtesy permitted; but, suspecting now that more would be demanded, boy as he was, he took his resolution with equal promptitude and prudence,

* Barnes, 35.

and bending his body a little towards the throne, spake with a firm voice, to this effect: "I, Edward, by the grace of God, king of England, lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine, hereby do homage to thee, Philip, king of France, to hold the duchy of Guienne as duke thereof, and the earldom of Ponthieu and Monstreul as earl thereof, and as peer of France, in like manner as my predecessors did homage for the said dukedom and earldom to thy predecessors." However Philip might be displeased at this disappointment of his confident expectations, he dissembled his feeling, and told his chancellor to inform the king his cousin, that the manner of his predecessors in performing homage was, "putting off the crown, and laying aside both sword and spurs, to do it kneeling, with their hands between the king of France's knees, or his great chamberlain's hands; and that this they were always to do, either in person, or by sufficient proxy of some high prince or prelate, then and there promising faith and homage to the king of France, as to their sovereign lord of whom they held those lands and honours." Edward would not submit to this; he said they could show him no precedent for one crowned head so to humble himself before another. And when they produced records to establish their point, he refused to be concluded by that evidence, and said he would proceed no farther till he should have consulted his own records; then, if he should find therein that any thing more had been done than what he had performed, he would acknowledge it by his letters patent to the French king. Philip, with proper courtesy and self-command, replied, "Fair cousin of England, we will not here be thought desirous of imposing any thing upon you against right and equity: what you have done sufficeth for the present, so that upon your return, when you have consulted your own records, and seen what your predecessors have done on like occasions, you will send unto us an acknowledgment of the same under your broad seal."*

The assembly broke up with appearances of friend-

* Barnes, 56.

ship on both sides; but Philip is said to have revolved deeply in his mind this affront put upon him when he had looked for such high honour; and, reflecting in that mood upon Edward's pretensions to the succession, it is also affirmed that he devised how to seize his person, and detain him till he should have made his own conditions with him. Any thing of bad faith, any thing that is dishonourable, perfidious, and inhuman, may be believed of the age of chivalry, when we look at its dark side. This would have been a slight offence in the iniquitous policy of those times. The bishop of Lincoln is supposed to have discovered or suspected the design; and Edward, in consequence, hastily departed, and came safely to England, but bringing home a sting with him as if his honour had been wounded; a feeling which, when it was inflamed by actual wrongs, did not let him rest till he had given it its full course. Ambassadors were soon sent after him, to press the performance of that more particular acknowledgment which he had promised. The records were examined; and the king and his council saw that things had indeed been of old so performed, as they now were demanded to be done. Many of the barons could not brook this, and would rather the king of England should at once advance his claim to the crown of France, of the validity of which they had fully persuaded themselves, than that he should demean himself by a form of homage so derogatory from his own dignity. But Edward's council were too wary to venture on this course in the then state of their own country; and Edward, however aspiring in his desires and hopes, was prudent beyond his years, and waited patiently, or impatiently, not only "till he had better weighed his own strength, and sounded his friends and allies," but till such provocation had been given, that policy seemed to justify what ambition prompted. Yet he was not easily persuaded to make what, to him, appeared a humiliating acknowledgment; and the French ambassadors were kept in England through the winter, and far into the spring, before they were despatched with his let-

ters patent, sealed with the broad seal. All that had been demanded was not acknowledged in these letters. An acknowledgment that the homage should be performed bareheaded and ungirt seems studiously to have been avoided; and if this was implied in the general admission that the homage which he had made at Amiens was, and ought to be, intended liege, care was taken to guard against such an implication, by inserting these words:.. "And to the intent that hereafter should arise no difference for this cause, we promise, for us and our successors, as duke of Aquitaine, that this homage shall be made in this manner: the king of England, duke of Aquitaine, shall hold his hands between the hands of the king of France, and he that is to speak for the king of France shall say thus:—'You become liegeman to our lord the king, here present, as duke of Guienne and peer of France, and you promise to bear to him faith and loyalty? Say, *Yes.*' And the king of England, duke of Aquitaine, and his successors, shall say *Yes.* And then the king of France shall receive the said king of England and duke of Guienne to the said homage liege, with faith and troth, by word of mouth, saving his own right, and all others." The same form was repeated for the earldom of Ponthieu and Monstreul, "and thus it shall be done and received as often as the said homage shall be done." The letters ended with promising in good faith to hold and keep entirely the peace and accord made between the kings of France and the kings of England, dukes of Guienne.

It was little apprehended, at Edward's birth, that death would open for him a claim on the French crown. The then king of France wished him to be called Philip, after the queen's father, as if to denote his French descent, but against this motion the English nobility prevailed*; Edward being to English ears a popular name, probably, not so much in reference to Edward Longshanks, who was rather feared than loved, as because of the holiness imputed to the Confessor, and the sup-

* Barnes, 1.

posed excellence of his laws. Glad would the French king now have been, if Edward had sprung from any other maternal stock; for the Salic law, more reasonable in appearance than in reality, was not yet so clearly established as to render the English king's claim by any means futile, especially when advanced by one who was likely to have both the inclination and the power to urge it. A slight acquaintance with history suffices to show with how little probity nations have in all ages acted towards each other. But when they proceed to extremities, then, in the anxiety which each party manifests to cast the reproach of unfaithfulness upon the other, when both have been equally faithless, a sense of the shame at least is acknowledged, if not of the sin.* The secret protest whereby Edward salved his conscience while it was yet unseared, proves that he had inwardly resolved upon supporting his claim by arms, whenever opportunity might favour him: and, on the other hand, by a policy little less reprehensible, the king of France though bound by treaty towards England, continually afforded assistance to the Scotch; by such means fomenting a war which he thought would give sufficient occupation to a young and aspiring prince. He used to say, there could never be perfect peace and quietness in Christendom, .. meaning security for France against this country, .. till the king of France should act as umpire between the realms of Scotland and England.†

This was a mode of hostility which could not long be carried on without being discovered; and which, when discovered, could pass unnoticed only while there was

A. D. 1336.

* Edward felt and acknowledged that his conduct at this time had not been consistent with the dignity and openness of his character. In his letter, A. D. 1346, "De causâ guerræ contra Philippum de Valesio, clero et populo exponendâ," he says, "Sanè, cum ad majorem ætatem essemus provecti, metuentes grave nobis posse præjudicium generari, si dissimulassemus ulteriùs de immiscendo nos hæreditati nostræ prædictæ, omnia et singula, si quæ per imbecillitatem et simplicitatem minoris ætatis possimus dici fecisse, nobis præjudicialia in hâc parte, statim, quatenùs de facto processerunt cum de jure non tenuerunt, revocavimus effectualitèr et expressè." — *Rymer*, tom. iii. part i. p. 72.

† Barnes, 93. On the other hand, the English had the maxim,

"He that the realm of France would win,
Must with Scotland first begin."

no power of resenting it. Upon sure information that the Scotch, with the aid of adventurers from all countries, .. outlaws they were called, men who were ready to serve in any cause, for pay and for plunder, .. were fitting out ships at Calais, from which port they infested the English seas, and now threatened more serious operations, Edward gave orders for equipping a fleet against them*; and the French, who saw that open war could not long be averted, and thought they could at this time begin it to advantage, invaded Gascony, and sent six and twenty galleys, with other ships of war, to infest the coast of England, and aid their allies in Scotland. Upon this, Edward issued a commission to his admirals, lord Geoffrey Say, of the southern and western sea, and lord John Norwich of the northern sea, to collect their force, and go in search of the enemy. The words of the commission are remarkable. "Calling to mind," the king said, "that our progenitors the kings of England have heretofore been lords of the English sea on every side, yea, the defenders thereof against the encroachments of enemies; and seeing it would greatly grieve us, if in this kind of defence our royal honour should (which God forbid!) be lost, or in any way diminished, in our time; and desiring, with the help of God, to prevent all dangers of this nature, to provide for the safeguard and defence of our realm and subjects, and to restrain the malice of our enemies; we do strictly require and charge you, by the duty and allegiance wherein you stand bound unto us, according to the special trust reposed in you, that, with all diligence you make search after the galleys and other ships of war abroad against us; and stoutly and manfully set upon them, if they should presume to bend their course towards the ports of our dominions, or the coasts of Scotland. And if they steal away from you, then you are without any delay to follow after them, and them courageously to destroy, for the conservation of our royal honour." An injunction followed, that no hurt should be done to mer-

* Rymer, vol. ii. part ii. p. 911.

chants and others passing by sea, who had no intent either to offend the English or to succour their enemies; and a power was given for impressing seamen.*

Several ships belonging to the Cinque Ports were taken up at Bristol, by virtue of this proclamation: but though Bristol had long been a considerable port, there were no stores there for fitting them out as ships of war; and leave was therefore given, upon due security, that they should return home, there to be equipped for the public service.† The old feud between the seamen of the Cinque Ports and Yarmouth still subsisted; and there was reason to apprehend that, as on a former occasion, this might break out into a private war, even upon the enemy's coast. To guard against this danger, delegates from both parties were ordered to repair before the primate, the chancellor, and others of the king's counsel, and there adjust their differences, on pain of forfeiting all that could be forfeited‡; for, unless this peace were made, there was little hope of acting against the French with effect. The ships from the western ports were ordered to rendezvous at Portsmouth; those from the east, in the Orwell. Complaint was made to the Sicilian court, that galleys were fitted out in that island for the Scotch, under pretence of being intended for the holy war; and the Genoese were thanked for having impeded a preparation of the same kind: the Scotch were also seeking to obtain ships in Norway.§ But neither was England provided, at that time, with a naval force sufficient for the emergency; and galleys and ships fitted for transporting horses¶, were procured from Genoa. Edward had at this time a willing parliament and a willing people. Large grants were granted for a war which now appeared to be inevitable, and in which it was felt that the honour of the nation was concerned; a

* Barnes, 103. † Rymer, vol. ii. part ii. p. 933.

‡ "Sub foresfacturâ omnium quæ nobis forisfacere poteritis." — *Rymer*, vol. ii. part ii. p. 943.

§ Ibid. 950. ‖ Ibid. 946 949

¶ Usceria. *Usceri*, Italian. *Huisserie*, French. *Door-ship* is Cotgrave's interpretation. They were, probably, in supposed imitation of the ark, with doors in the sides. — *Rymer*, 947.

consideration to which nations used ever to be more alive than to their mere interests,.. for this, among other just reasons, that it was what they could better understand. Liberal grants were made; the money which had been collected for a crusade, and deposited in the cathedrals, was given by the clergy, of their own accord, for this as for a nearer and more pressing duty; and much of the church plate is said to have been taken also by the king's authority.

A.D. 1337. Negotiations for the adjustment of existing differences were still going on in France: notwithstanding which, Philip aided the then exiled king of Scotland, David Bruce, with a well-appointed fleet, in which David embarked himself, and with which he inflicted much evil upon the isles of Guernsey and Jersey, and upon the Hampshire coast: and with this the covert war on the part of France ended. The Flemish ports were of great consequence to France; and the earl of that country was wholly in the French interest. On the other hand, a fierce popular spirit had arisen among that turbulent people, who were, indeed, provoked by sufficient wrongs; and in Jacob van Arteveld, the brewer of Ghent, the most famous* demagogue of the middle ages, Edward found a ready and a powerful confederate. The French and the Flemings who were of the party of the earl, Louis de Nevers, took possession of the Isle of Cadsant, occupied it with a strong garrison, and from thence infested the seas. They hoped to intercept the English ambassadors on their way home from Hainault. A convoy, therefore, of forty "stout ships, well manned, was sent to wait for the ambassadors at Dordrecht. This service they performed safely; and on their return captured two Flemish men of war, with many Scotch of high rank on board, and 15,000*l.* in gold and silver, sent by France to her allies in Scotland. The bishop of Glasgow was with this party. By chance he was slightly hurt in the head,

* His son Philip belongs to a far higher class. He is, perhaps, the most heroic, certainly the most tragic, character in the history of those times.

and, being brought into Sandwich, soon died, through that and his grief together.'*

When the ambassador represented to the king the mischief which was done by the garrison in Cadsant, Edward replied, that he would speedily provide a remedy. Forthwith the admiral of the northern ports, sir Walter de Manny, was ordered, wherever he could find the enemy, whether at sea or in any harbour, manfully to attack and more manfully to vanquish them.† Henry Plantagenet, earl of Derby, and the lord Reginald Cobham, the earl of Suffolk, lord Robert Hufford, the lords Robert Bourchier, John Norwich, and William Beauchamp, with 500 men-at-arms and 2000 archers, embarked in this fleet at London. "The first tide they went to Gravesend, the second to Margate, and with the third they took the deep sea, and made directly for Flanders," with wind and tide at will; "and so, being come before Cadsant, they prepared themselves for battle, and having placed the archers on the decks before them, in the name of God and St. George they sounded their trumpets, and sailed toward the town." Cadsant was then a much larger island than it now is; great part of it having either been made, by the irruption of the water, what in that country is called drowned land, or worn away by the continued action of the tide.‡ At that time human industry had rescued more from the sea than the sea had taken from man; and the land repaid with large increase § the labour which was bestowed beyond it: but it had been laid waste by the Zeelanders some thirty years before ||, when they burnt

* Barnes, 106. Froissart, chap. xxx.

† "Dictos hostes nostros, sive in mari, sive in portubus, ut eos invenire poteritis, viriliter aggrediamini, et virilius expugnetis." — *Rymer*, vol. ii. part ii p. 1005.

‡ Sanderi, Flandria, tom. ii. p. 209.

§ It is still singularly fertile, and produces the best wheat. In Busching's time, a large proportion of the inhabitants were French refugees and Saltzburghers, driven from their own country for a like cause, with equal injustice, but not with equal barbarity.

|| Sueyro, i. 331. There is a most spirited description of this in the Rijm-kroniik of Melis Stoke, book iv. v. 910. 1003. "Ad hanc insulam," says Lud. Guicciardini, "variæ quondam commissæ navales pugnæ, concurrebant enim et stabulabantur hic ut plurimum omnes Flandrorum hostes. Angli puta, Hollandi, et aliæ nationes."

the town of Sluys. The force now in the island consisted of 5000 soldiers, knights and squires, with their retinues, beside the inhabitants, most of whom, and of the people of Damme, were engaged in the defence; the latter, perhaps, remembering the ill treatment they had received in Edward I.'s time; the former, whatever their inclination may have been between the parties who thus invaded Flanders, looking upon any invaders (and well they might) as enemies. They were commanded by the lord of Richebourg, Guy, known by the little honourable, but in those days not opprobrious, appellation of the bastard of Flanders; being illegitimate son, or brother, to the reigning earl.*

The men in Cadsant saw the English armament approach, and knew well who they were, and with what intent they came; but, like good warriors, they ranged themselves along by the dikes on the sands, with their banners waving before them. Sixteen "valiant gentlemen" were, for encouragement, then and there made knights. That honour was often, in the age of chivalry, conferred before a battle as an excitement; the possibility being, perhaps, borne in mind, that some of those who deserved it might not survive to receive it as a reward; and that, in such cases, the empty title would be some satisfaction to their friends, and add some honour to a monument. Sir Guy the bastard was an expert and hardy captain, alike able to encourage his people, first by exhortation, and then by example; and the one party was not more manfully resolved to assail, than the other was resolutely bent to defend.

But when the English archers, with a great shout, began all at one instant to send among them a thick flight of deadly arrows, they that kept the shore recoiled in dismay, leaving many dead, but very many more grievously wounded; yet, when the assailants landed in good order, and came to handystrokes, they presently rallied, and bravely disputed the ground. Henry Plantagenet, pressing forward with that spirit which was never want-

* Barnes, 116. Sueyro, i. 448.

ing in his royal blood, was beaten down in the press; and, though unhurt, being cased in complete mail, was, because of the armour that protected him, unable to rise. But sir Walter Manny, who was near enough to see him fall, made for the spot; and, encouraging his men to the rescue by crying aloud "Lancaster for the earl of Derby!" he laid about with his battleaxe, cleared the place by fine force, raised him from the ground, and set him again safe at the head of his own people. Upon this rescue both powers joined with greater animosity than before; each encouraged by its own success, and provoked by what the other had obtained. "The battle," says Joshua Barnes, "was surely fought on both hands very well; for the Flemings were chosen men, and the English resolved not to part stakes by any means, but to win all at their first setting out, or perish. Many, therefore, were slain on both sides. But all the while the archers of England, flanking their men-at-arms, shot with such violence, and so wholly together, that they were not to be endured."* To them, indeed, the victory was chiefly ascribed. The bastard of Flanders was taken prisoner. Among the slain were some of the first nobles in the country, and six and thirty knights and esquires, besides some of those who, in the pride of youth and courage, had that day received their knighthood. More than 3000 fell, either in the field or in the streets and houses; and as many more of the islanders perished in the church, into which they had fled for safety; for the Welsh who were in the expedition set fire to it. The town was taken, plundered, and burnt; and the conquerors, who had suffered no considerable loss, though it had been a sore battle, and well fought hand to hand, returned to England with much prey and many prisoners. The bastard of Flanders received from Edward the most liberal treatment, "for he was a valiant man;" his oath was taken

* "No pudieron resistir à los ballasteros Inglescs, por no estar aun acostumbrados aquel modo de pelear." — *Sueyro*, i. 448. But this author ascribes to the arbalist what was done by the long bow.

that he would continue "true prisoner," and then he was subjected to no restraint: but he was so won with the king's generosity, that, in the course of the year, of his own accord, "he became English;" that is, he became liegeman to the king of England, and did homage to him as one who heartily embraced his service. Sir Walter Manny, it is said, might have had 11,000*l.* for his ransom and that of the other prisoners; but, after two years the king gave him 8000*l.** Good prisoners, in those days, were the best prizes that war afforded; and this led sometimes to the greatest cruelty, and sometimes to the greatest courtesy and magnanimity, according to the different tempers of the captors; but the evil effect, it cannot be doubted, must have been far more frequent than the good.

Though this loss had fallen wholly upon the Flemings, it was far from producing any ill effect upon the English interests in Flanders. The popular party said, that the sufferers deserved what they had brought upon themselves; seeing that, without the consent of the good towns, and against their will, they had kept a garrison there, to act against their friends the English. Arteveld was well pleased with what had happened, and earnestly invited Edward to come over, saying that the people greatly desired to see him.† England had counted too confidently on the good-will of the Genoese, when Edward thanked that government for obstructing the preparations of his enemies in their ports. At this time Philip was infesting the coasts of Aquitaine with ships which he had hired from the Ghibelines of Genoa, it is said, and from the Guelfs of Monaco.‡ Philip had been arming, ostensibly for a crusade upon a greater scale than any former one. Into this channel the pope would fain have diverted that martial spirit which, if not so directed, would, it was but too evident, set Europe in flames: and the object was so tempting to an ardent and ambitious mind, that Edward would have

* Froissart, chap. xxxi. Hollnshed, ii. 607. Barnes, 116, 117.
† Froissart, chap. xxxii. ‡ Barnes, 117. Folieta quoted.

engaged in it, if the king of France would have restored the possessions which he had taken from him in Gascony, or have pledged himself to restore them after his return.* But Philip was bent upon retaining what he had taken; feeling himself, at this time, superior to the king of England both in resources and in policy. The English entered eagerly into the war, and enabled their enterprising and popular prince to subsidise as many of the inferior powers as could be induced to league with him. One year passed before these allies could be brought into the field: in the second, two of the subsidised counts withdrew with their forces as soon as he approached the frontiers of France; and though the French and English armies lay, during several weeks, within a few leagues of each other, and even faced each other in the field, no battle ensued. The defection of his allies had made Edward too weak for attacking the enemy, and Philip was too prudent to put any thing upon the hazard; knowing that his opponent must at length retire into winter-quarters, and was, meantime, dissipating treasures which could not be easily supplied.

Edward had, indeed, already pawned his crown and his queen's jewels; the war had hitherto proved gainful to those only who received his subsidies; and two years of apparent inaction, or useless demonstrations, had cooled the English people, who were also alarmed, and not without reason, for their own shores. In Surrey and Sussex, the people refused to pay the imposts levied for the defence of the sea-coast†: the government, however, was strong enough to enforce obedience. The king's purveyors were forbidden to draw any provisions from the country within twelve leagues of the coast, lest the military array which had been ordered thither for its protection should be compelled to disband for want of food‡; and no archers were to be drafted from the same tract, their service being required

* Barnes, 91. 118. † Rymer, vol. ii. part ii. p. 1025. ‡ Ibid.

on the spot.* These precautions did not secure the south coast from insult and serious injury. The enemy attacked and burned Portsmouth; which town was, in 39. consequence, exempted from the payment of tenths for three years.† London itself, which, since the accession of Canute, had feared no maritime enemy, was threatened, and so far deemed in danger, that orders were given for fortifying it with stone ramparts, or with palisades on the sides of the river, and for driving piles into its bed; the enemy, it was said, having brought together their galleys in no small number: all persons having any share in the city, religioners not excepted, were called upon to contribute to this work.‡ A prudent order was given, that in the churches along the coast not more than one bell should be rung on Sundays or other holydays, nor, on any occasion, except when the alarm was to be given against an enemy, and then all the steeples were to speak.§

These were not needless precautions; for Philip had set forth a mighty fleet from his own ports, with the aid of his allies the Bretons, and with assistance also from Spain; and their instructions were to land, wheresoever they could to advantage, and put all to fire and sword. Sir Hugh Quirial, sir Pierre Bahuchet, and sir Nicholas Barbenoire were the joint-admirals of this fleet; which scoured the seas in several squadrons. One detachment, consisting of thirteen vessels great and small, fell in with two fair and goodly ships of England, bringing home goods and money which had been received in exchange for wool in Flanders. These ships were named the Edward and the Christopher, .. names which, in remembrance of that day, ought to have been perpetuated in the English navy. Two lesser barks and a caravel were in company with them; and these, "being unfit for fight," made off and escaped by their swift sailing; but the Edward and the Christopher "stood stiffly to their tackling," against a force

* Rymer, vol. ii. part ii. p. 1026.
† Ibid. 1042.
‡ Ibid. 1062.
§ Ibid. 1067.

exceeding them so greatly in numbers and in men, and all being ships of war. They maintained the action for nine hours; and then, "wearied with labour, wounds, and slaughter," and after a loss of 600 men on both parts, both were taken, and most of the wounded English thrown overboard.* The Frenchmen now "sore troubled this realm by sea, especially where the champain countries stretch towards the sea-coast." They landed at Hastings on the feast of Corpus Christi, and there burnt some houses, and slew some people. In the harbours of Devonshire and Cornwall, and high up the Bristol Channel, they took and burnt ships, killing the mariners who fell into their hands. They landed at Plymouth, and burnt the greater part of the town: but there the earl of Devonshire, sir Hugh Courtenay, a brave old man, who had well-nigh reached the age of fourscore, raised the men of the country; seeing that the crossbows of the French did some execution among them at a distance, he closed upon them without loss of time; and, beating many of them down, drove the others to the shore and into the water (for the galleys had all been drawn off, and were standing aloof), and about 500 are said to have been drowned."†

Fifty of this hostile fleet, having many Genoese and Spaniards among them, ascended the Southampton river, and landed at that town on a Sunday morning at nine o'clock, while the people were at church. The inhabitants, being thus taken by surprise, fled, they who could. The invaders then proceeded to sack the place, committing every kind of enormity upon those who fell into their hands, and destroying what they could not carry away or plunder. "Those of the nobler sort whom they could light on, they hung up in their own houses, and at their departure set the whole town on fire." The day and the night were passed in these excesses; but on the morrow, by break of day, before they were half got to their ships, sir John Arundel,

* Barnes, 136. Holinshed, ii. 610. Fabyan, 447.
† Holinshed, ii. 609. Barnes, 137.

"a valiant gentleman of Hampshire," arrived with a resolute band of brave men, and with those townsmen who had taken flight on the yesterday, and who, "though they returned too late to save their friends, came yet soon enough to revenge them." Falling upon the enemy, while encumbered with their spoil, confused in their haste and alarm, and many of them, perhaps, in a state of intoxication, they slew about 500 on the spot. Among those who paid with their lives for the outrages committed on this occasion, is one who, by our chroniclers, is said to have been a son of the king of Sicily. A rough clown, who laid about him with a flail like a madman, beat him to the ground. The Sicilian, not being able to speak a word of English, called out in French "Rançon! rançon!" meaning, that he desired to surrender, and be taken to ransom: but the countryman, nothing understanding either his French or his coat-armour, answered, "I know thou art a Françon, and therefore thou shalt die;" and he still laid on, till he had threshed him to death.* Here too, as at Plymouth, most of the galleys had been hauled off, lest the English should board them; and not a few of the fugitives were drowned in endeavouring to get on board.† Upon confident information that the enemy designed to make another descent there, the government issued orders for fortifying Southampton on the water side; and whereas many of the former inhabitants had provided for their own security by removing from the place, all who possessed any lands or tenements in the town or its suburbs, and had been wont to reside there, were commanded to return thither, and rebuild their dwellings, if they had been destroyed, according to their means. If they failed in doing this, or delayed to do it, the lands and tenements were to be escheated to the king, and given by him to those who were willing to dwell there: so far was the principle of com-

* Stephen Duck ought to have immortalised this man. During the Hussite war, the flail was found to be a formidable weapon in the hands of resolute men.

† Barnes, 157.

pulsory service carried in those times.* Winchester, also, was considered to be in danger from the predatory fleet; the more so, because there were many defects in its walls. Instructions were now given to repair them with diligence; and for making the inhabitants provide themselves with arms in proportion to the goods which they possessed; and that they should be arrayed, and keep watch upon the walls when need should be; and that they who refused obedience should be put in custody. The people of Chichester were ordered, in like manner, to prepare for defence; and they were exempted, in consequence, for a year, from all requisitions of stores, cattle, or carriages for the public service.†

The lord Richard Talbot was appointed captain of Southampton, and allowed 20 men-at-arms for that service, and 100 archers at the king's wages, the soldiers having a month's pay beforehand, and the lord Richard 100*l.* by way of gratuity. The bishop of Winchester, the prior of St. Swithin's, and the abbot of Hyde, were ordered to keep at their manors in that neighbourhood, and be ready with all their men to assist him at his summons: and two pinnaces were always to be at his orders in that port. Carisbrook Castle was duly stored; and the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight, in consideration, as it should seem, of the losses they had sustained, were exempted from the payment of any aid to the king during the war: but it was also ordered that none of them should absent themselves from the island, their presence being so needful for its defence that they were not to be impanelled or summoned at any assize or inquest so long as the war lasted. But preparations were also made for the more hopeful operations of offensive war, and for the great national object of keeping the seas. For this object, and for the defence of the northern marches, the commons offered 30,000 sacks of wool (then the staple wealth of England), on certain conditions; 2500 immediately to be received in part of

* Rymer, vol. ii. part ii. p. 1076. † Ibid. 1077.

payment, if the king (who was then on the continent) liked the conditions; and if not, they were freely offered to him. The lords, till they should know his pleasure, granted a tenth of their grain, wool, and lambs, and of all their own demesnes. The mariners of the Cinque Ports engaged to have their fleet ready by a certain time, twenty-one ships of their own, and nine of the Thames, and to bear half the charges themselves; "the other half the privy council promised to bear of their own good will to their king and country; but not of duty, nor that it should stand for a precedent." The mariners of the west promised to set forth ninety sail, and ten ships of the burthen of 100 tons, or more and to defray the whole charges, if they could. "Two sufficient scholars" were appointed to compute the charges, one for the western, the other for the Cinque Ports. From Portsmouth westward, all the ships of 100 tons or upwards were to rendezvous at Dartmouth, under their admiral, Richard Fitzallen, earl of Arundel; those of the Cinque Ports and the Thames at Winchelsea, under William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon. They had orders to stay all other ships which might be passing, and warn them into safe harbours; "and, to furnish this fleet with soldiers, besides those whose duty was to serve, and those who were pressed, proclamation was made that all who had obtained charters of pardon from the king should now repair to the sea-coast for his service, on pain of forfeiting the same." *

While these preparations were going forward, the Cinque-Ports' men performed a most gallant enterprise, which they undertook for the sake of revenging "in part the late affronts done to England by the French navy,".. affronts in which they had had their share; Sandwich having been insulted, and Hastings and Rye having suffered. They embarked in pinnaces and well-appointed boats, in the middle of January, and pushed over from Dover to Boulogne. Such an enterprise, and

* Barnes, 151.

at such a season, had not been dreamt of by the enemy; having chosen, like smugglers, fit weather for their purpose, .. misty and dark, .. or having been favoured with it by fortune, .. they were hardly descried before they were in the harbour. Then setting upon the French with the resolution to be looked for in men who had thus gone to seek them, they burnt nineteen galleys, four great ships, and twenty boats, with all their tackling; the block-house, which was full of naval stores; and the houses that were near the shore. They landed also, defeated the townsmen in a skirmish, set fire to the lower town, hung twelve captains of the ships which they had taken, "and so bade them farewell for that time."* It were to be wished that this brave adventure had not been disgraced by the death of the twelve prisoners; but, in war, barbarities provoke barbarities; and the treatment of the wounded English in the Edward and Christopher, and the enormities which the French committed wherever they had landed on the coast, had roused a feeling of immitigable enmity. During a conference which was ineffectually held with the view of bringing about a peace, Edward asked the two cardinals who were present, whether he had not great cause for making war against the French, if only to revenge their extreme cruelty to his poor subjects who fell into their hands? An Italian cardinal somewhat scornfully replied, .. "My lord, the realm of France is encompassed about with so strong a cord of silk, that it cannot be broken by the strength of the kingdom of England. Wherefore, O king, you will do well to stay for the arrival of the Dutchmen, and others your friends and confederates, and I believe you will not find them here in haste!" Fired at these words, Edward made answer, that he would ride into France with banner displayed, and there take a view of these invincible Frenchmen; and that he would either win that realm against whosoever should oppose or leave his body on the field. Many weeks had not

* Barnes, 163.

passed before the lord Geoffrey Scroop, then lord chief justice of England, took this cardinal to the top of a high tower, and from thence showed him the frontiers of France, where, for some fifteen leagues, it seemed as if the whole country was on fire. "My lord," said he, "what thinketh your eminence now? Doth not the silken cord seem in great danger of being cracked?" *

A. D. 1340. So long as the king Edward relied upon his subsidised confederates more than upon the native strength of England, the French king was not without good ground for the confidence with which he regarded his aspiring adversary. That confidence carried him so far, that when the earl of Salisbury and Robert Ufford le Fitz, the earl of Suffolk's eldest son, were taken prisoners at the siege of Lisle, and sent in irons to Paris, exposed on the way, in a cart, to the mockery of the rabble in every town, village, and hamlet through which they passed, and there presented to him "as a lucky hansel of his future success," he gave orders that they should be put to death; and this would have been done, if John of Luxemburg, the abdicated king of Bohemia, had not, with a freedom which his former rank, his character, and his blindness authorised, interposed: "Sir," he said, "if these your prisoners were not of as high merit as quality, I should not take much notice of them at this time, though I should hardly allow of putting to death the meanest enemy in cold blood. They are, indeed, open enemies to your majesty, .. but honourable enemies, who never fought against you save in their liege master's quarrel, and not then till open defiance had been made; nor is it likely that, when taken less by valour than by a subtle contrivance they would have yielded as they did, had it not been in the belief that they should be treated like prisoners of war. Let not the most Christian king of France prove more rigorous, and less just and honourable, than even his enemies supposed him to be!

* Barnes, 137. 142.

The event of war is doubtful; and if these men should now suffer, who of your lords would willingly fight in your cause, seeing that, if taken, they must never expect to be put to ransom, but, in revenge for these men's blood, to inevitable death? It may be any man's fortune to be made prisoner; but it will be an everlasting blot to him who kills those in cold blood, whom the law of arms makes only prisoners of war. My royal friend and brother, let us be brave enemies, but merciful victors! at least, let us forbear from such severities as these, till we are provoked by the example of the English to use them." This generous remonstrance prevailed: Philip, however, committed them to close prison *; and it is affirmed that he set a price upon Edward's head. †

Of this Edward was apprised by his brother-in-law the duke of Gelderland. He was informed, also, that strict charge had been given by Philip to his admirals to watch for him, and that they had engaged to present him, alive or dead, at Paris; for they had command of the most gallant armada that any man living had ever seen, being more than 400 sail, whereof 200 were great vessels, well manned, and stored with all habiliments of war; "wherefore it behoved him to look to himself!" Advice to the same tenour came from the lord Morley, his admiral of the northern fleet; and his council entreated him by no means to attempt the passage "without a royal navy." He was then at Ipswich, meaning to cross from that coast to Flanders: the force which he had there ready consisted of nearly 200 sail; but upon this information of the enemy's strength and intention, he despatched the bishop of Lincoln to the southward ports, and went himself to Yarmouth, and caused so many more vessels to be equipped, that the whole armament, when collected, consisted of 260 ships, great and small, well manned with archers and men at arms; beside these there were some transports, having many

* Barnes, 169.

† Ibid. 181.

ladies on board, who were going over to the queen, then at Ghent.

With this fleet Edward sailed from the Orwell, on Thursday, the 22d of June, "about the first hour of the day, in the name of God and St. George." On the morrow, being the eve of St. John the Baptist, they came to the coast of Flanders, about Blanksberg, and as they approached the Zwijn, and discovered so great a number of ships that their masts and streamers made them resemble a wood, the king asked the master of his vessel what he supposed them to be? "May it please your majesty," replied the master, "I take them to be Normans and others, sent out by the French king to rob and spoil your coasts, and to take your majesty's person if they can: and among them I doubt not we shall find those very men who burnt your good town of Southampton, and took your two good ships, the St. Edward and the Christopher." . . "Ha!" said the king, "I have long desired to fight with the Frenchmen; and now I shall fight with some of them, by the grace of God and St. George; for truly they have done me so many displeasures that I shall be revenged, an I may!" He then commanded the lord Reginald Cobham, sir John Chandos, and sir Stephen de la Burkin, to land, and ride along the shore, "to view the countenance of the enemy." They did this at safe leisure, all Flanders being then friendly to the English; and they approached near enough to see that the fleet, which they estimated at about 400 sail, was divided into three squadrons, all riding in the harbour of Sluys: among them were nineteen ships, so large, that they had never seen so many of that size in company before, and the chief of them they recognised for the Christopher; that ship having, probably, been named after the gigantic saint of hagiological romance, because of its extraordinary magnitude. Evening was beginning to close when they returned to make their report; and therefore the king, "who would needs for that time be admiral of the fleet himself," gave orders to cast anchor,

resolving to have the day before him, and to begin the fight next morning.

The place where the English were about to gain their first great naval victory, properly so called (for in the battle of Damme seamanship had no part), was in early times the most flourishing port upon the Flemish coast. Some, indeed, have supposed that it was occupied as such by the Nervii in Cæsar's time, and that the settlement which they possessed there was destroyed by Ariovistus. William of Ypres took possession of it with his band of freebooters, who are said to have been chiefly English; and from thence he infested the adjacent country till he was driven out by Theodoric of Alsace, and repairing to England, acquired an ill name there in the service of king Stephen. At that time the place was called Lammensvliet, from Lambert, an Englishman, who constructed the sluices there; it was also called port Zuin, or the south port; and this name, in the course of corruption, becoming the Swine (Het Zwijn), still distinguishes the gulf, or inlet, which then formed a harbour capable of containing the largest vessels that were then known, though it is now so choked with sand that even the smallest craft can no longer enter. The entrance of the Zwijn has been called the Horse-market, because, in certain winds, the sound of the waters there has been compared to the confused and irregular trampling of horses' feet. About the year 1330, the name of the work superseded that of the engineer, and the town, which had grown up, was called Sluys. It then began to flourish under the favour of the earls of Flanders; but Bruges would brook no rival near; the earls had been compelled, by the merchants of that powerful city, to revoke the privileges which they had granted, which, in fact, were incompatible with the earlier city's vested rights, and which, by giving Sluys the command of the Zwijn, placed the trade of Damme and Bruges at its mercy. These merchants were able to enforce their pretensions by that law from which there is no appeal; and when Sluys had been granted

to the earl of Namur, the men of Bruges attacked it; defeated him and the Guelderlanders and Germans whom he had brought thither to defend it; took the town, burnt it, and levelled it to the ground; nor, when the inhabitants rebuilt their habitations, would they allow them to erect any works for their defence.*

Many of the enemy's fleet were Spaniards from the ports in the bay of Biscay, the seamen of that coast being renowned for their seamanship even among the hardy sailors of the north. By means of the king of Navarre, Philip is supposed to have obtained their aid. The Genoese galleys were commanded by Egidio Bocanegra, the Barbenoir, or Blackbeard, of the French, brother to the doge, and one of the best commanders of his nation by land or sea. They had taken their station there, to prevent the English from landing in the port for which they expected them to make; and also to obstruct the succours which, from the neighbouring ports, the Flemings and Brabanters were on the alert to afford them. But Bocanegra, like a skilful seaman, was not for waiting an attack when the sun and the tide would be against them, and the wind not in their favour, but for putting out to meet the English, and so taking advantage of their own superior force. The French admiral, Pierre Bahuchet, is said to have opposed this; there was a jealousy between them; and this worse charge has been brought against him, that his ships were neither provided nor manned as they ought to have been, and that he had defrauded the king by false musters.† The advice, however, was manifestly too reasonable to be rejected: and early in the morning they came out of the haven, in three squadrons, and in good order. Indeed, it was no matter of choice with them, had it been otherwise advisable to have remained there; for the men of Bruges were in array upon the shore, ready to act against them upon any opportunity; and they could

* Sanderi Flandria, ii. 212. Lud. Guicciardini, 391. Marchantius, 52. Sueyro, i. 409. Busching, xiv. 252. (French translation.)
† Sueyro, i. 458, 459.

feel little security there any longer than while they were masters of the sea.

On the other hand, Edward was so confident in the skill and courage of his men, that he disregarded the enemy's superiority in numbers. His great ships, well manned with archers, were placed in the van; and between every two there was one with men at arms. A squadron was kept in reserve, to prevent the French from closing upon his van, and to assist wherever aid might be required. A third, in which were 500 archers and 300 men at arms, was appointed to protect the vessels where the women were aboard, whom the king is said to have "comforted all he could." Having disposed the fleet in this array, he gave orders to hoist the sails, "designing to come into a quarter wind, so as to get the advantage of the sun and the wind;" and as he stood off with this purpose, some of the French, who were more brave than considerate, supposed that the English, seeing themselves so far inferior in force, wished to avoid an action. But when they descried the banner royal of England, they knew that no such intention was entertained; and their hopes were then raised the higher, thinking that so great a prize might fall into their hands.

Before the general action commenced, Bocanegra sent forth four galleys against a ship called the Rich Oliver, which was advanced before the others. It is one of the remarkable circumstances belonging to this action, that galleys were not* employed in it according to the ancient mode of war, no attempt being made to produce any effect with their beaks. In the present instance, they assailed their enemy with stones and shot from engines† on all sides, so that the Rich

* And this, according to Charnock (i. 341.), was the first time they were disused; "since, though the use of ships, as vessels of a different construction from galleys were then called, had been partially adopted for many years, yet in every preceding action which had taken place, even in the Atlantic, where the use of galleys became most exploded, they had been intermixed with the loftier vessels, built according to the newly introduced system." But *what* actions had taken place in the Atlantic at that time?

† Fabyan has embellished his narrative here in a way that might mislead many readers; he says that the enemy "assailed this ship, and beat her with gun-shot, and her men with hail-shot, exceedingly." And that "then

Oliver sustained a great loss in men, and was in great danger of being taken; but other vessels having now the wind at will*, came to the rescue in time, and the four galleys were boarded and won before the enemy could succour them. And now the fleets met; "the French joining battle with many trumpets and other instruments of martial music, and the English giving altogether a mighty shout, it sounded horribly upon the waters, the shores being not far off." At the same instant they sent a flight of arrows from their long-bows, which the French answered as liberally with cross-bow shot; "but the arrows did most execution by far." .. Then began a sore battle. The men at arms approached and fought hand to hand, for on both sides they were prepared with great hooks and grappling irons, both being alike willing that strength and prowess should decide the combat; and "many noble deeds of arms were that day done, assailing and defending, taking and rescuing again." The French had set the huge St. Christopher foremost, and the English made strenuous efforts to retake it, for they knew the king was much displeased at the loss of that good ship. So well they sped, and yet so bravely were resisted, that when they became masters, few were left alive on board to be taken to mercy. Her captain, Jan van Heyle, was one; a Flemish gentleman, who escaped death now, only to meet with it ere long from the hands of the populace in Bruges. The great Christopher was speedily manned with archers, and turned "her angry fore-deck against the Genoese." .. "This battle," says Froissart, "was right

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approached the whole fleet upon both sides with hideous and fearful din and noise of guns, with terrible flaming of wild fire and other, with thick shot of quarrels and arrows, and crushing of ships, that hideous and wonderful it was to behold, so that many a soul was there expelled from their bodies in short while." (p. 450.) He speaks of guns also, in the former action with the Edward and Christopher. They were not used in naval warfare till long after this; and I have not found any authority which leads me to suppose that wild-fire had been used as yet, nor that fire in any way was employed in this action.

* Charnock observes, that the weather-gage appears to have been seized for the first time in this action, as a most consequential preliminary point. — Hist. of Naval Architecture, i. 340.

fierce and terrible; for the battles on the sea are more dangerous and fiercer than on the land, by reason that on the sea there is no recoiling nor flying; there is no remedy but to fight, and to abide fortune, and every man to show his prowess." The St. Edward also was retaken, and the St. George, and the Black Cock.

The enemy had many engines for casting stones, and they employed them with great effect: a large ship, and a galley * belonging to Hull, were sunk by them, with all on board; and from a great ship which belonged to the king's wardrobe, there were but two men and a woman that escaped. The battle lasted from a little before ten in the morning, till seven in the evening. The first squadron of the enemy was entirely beaten; the second so sorely pressed, that the French leaped overboard to escape from the showers of arrows which were sent down on them. When farther exertion became hopeless, Bocanegra made off with his squadron. One large French ship, the St. Jacques of Dieppe, thought to have carried off with her a ship of Sandwich, belonging to the prior of Canterbury: but the Englishmen made a stout resistance; and the earl of Huntingdon, William Clinton, coming in his vessel to their aid, the contest continued through the night; at morning they got possession of the St. Jacques, and found 400 dead on board. The victory was rendered more complete by the opportune arrival of the lord Morley with part of the northern fleet, and by the aid of the Flemish small craft, which came to partake in it from all the adjacent ports. It was the greatest victory that had ever been gained on those seas. Two hundred and thirty sail were taken; among them the St. Dennis, "a mighty ship." One of the French admirals fell; Bahuchet, the other †, was hung from the main-yard of his own ship, because of the enormities which he, "to say no more, had permitted at Southampton." The carnage was very great; the largest

* Campbell, i. 139.
† According to Fabyan, both were thus put to death.

estimate of the English loss being 4000, the lowest on the other side 10,000; and this was carried by exaggeration to the number of 30,000; that it amounted to this on both sides, both parties seem to have agreed. Men are prone to exaggerate whatever is wonderful; but it is a strange propensity which leads them to magnify calamities, and to suppose that the merit of a victory is enhanced in proportion to the number of mourners whom it has made. No doubt, in those days, the proportion of deaths in battle was much greater than in modern war; they fought hand to hand, and not as with the bayonet, where the charge is almost instantly decided; but in such close combat as called forth personal and vindictive feelings; and the man who was not worth taking for his ransom had, it may be feared, in most cases, little chance for mercy.

The only person of distinction who fell on the English side was sir Thomas, eldest son of the lord Ralph Monthermer. The king is said to have been wounded in the thigh; the wound was so slight that he did not mention it in his letter to the bishops and clergy, which conveyed to England the first certain tidings of the battle; and this is the first despatch among the English records announcing a naval victory, .. a victory where the king commanded in person, and which was one of the most complete that has ever been obtained upon the seas. After the customary greeting, "We have thought good," said the king, "to intimate unto you, for your true certification and rejoicing, the bountiful benignity of God's great mercy lately poured upon us. It is not unknown to you, and to other our faithful subjects, with what storms of boisterous wars we have been tost and shaken, as in the great ocean. But although the rising surges of the sea be marvellous, yet more marvellous is the Lord above, who, turning the tempest into a calm, hath in so great dangers so mercifully respected us. For whereas we of late did ordain our passage into Flanders upon urgent causes, the lord Philip de Valois, our bitter enemy, under-

standing thereof, laid against us a mighty navy, intending thereby either to take our person, or at least to hinder our voyage; which voyage if it had been stayed, it had been the cutting off of all the great enterprises by us intended, and we had ourselves been brought to great confusion. But the God of mercies, seeing us so distressed, in such peril and danger, hath graciously, and beyond man's expectation, sent to us sufficient succour and strength of valiant soldiers, and a prosperous wind after our own desires, by the means whereof we set out of the haven into the seas, where we eftsoon perceived our enemies well appointed, and prepared to set upon us with a main multitude. Against whom, notwithstanding, our Lord and Saviour hath granted unto us the victory, through a strong and vehement conflict; in the which battle a mighty number of our enemies were destroyed, and well nigh all their whole navy taken, with some loss also on our part, but nothing like in comparison to theirs. By reason whereof we doubt not but that the passage of the seas hereafter shall be more quiet and safe for our subjects; and also many other commodities shall ensue, as we have good cause to hope. For which cause, we, devoutly considering the heavenly grace so mercifully wrought upon us, do render most humble thanks and praise to Christ our Lord and Saviour, beseeching Him, that as He hath been, and always is, ready to prevent our necessities in his own good time, so He will continue his helping hand ever toward us, and so direct us here temporally, that we may reign and rejoice with Him eternally in heaven. And in like sort we require your charitable assistance, that you also, with us, rising up to the praise of God alone, who hath begun to work with us so favourably for our good, do, in your public prayers and divine service, as well as in your private devotions, instantly recommend us unto the Lord, here travailling in these foreign countries, and seeking not only to recover our right in France, but also to advance the whole catholic church of Christ, and to rule our

people in righteousness. And that ye also call upon your clergy and people (each one through his diocese) to do the same; invoking all together the name of our Saviour on our behalf, that of his mercy He would please to give unto us, his humble servant, his grace and a docible heart, that we may so judge and govern here upon earth in equity, doing that which He hath commanded, that at length we may happily attain to that which He hath promised through our Lord and Saviour." *

The news of this great battle was conveyed to king Philip in a very different manner; for though ill tidings too often find ready tongues, it is not when the great and the powerful are to be told of their defeated armaments and baffled hopes. A court fool is said to have been made the instrument of conveying to the royal ear what every one else feared to communicate, and what no one else could so aptly "insinuate by subtlety of covert words." Accordingly he began to rail against the English as a set of dastardly poltroons, heaping upon them those reproaches to which the king knew that of all others they were least obnoxious; till Philip at last asked him how he came to think the English were such dastards. "Why," replied the fool, "because the faint-hearted rogues had not courage enough to jump overboard into the sea so bravely as our Normans and gentlemen of France did." †

* Foxe's Acts and Monuments, i. 430. Barnes, 184. This battle was long regarded as our greatest naval victory. Sir Roger Williams, when he describes Boisot's defeat of the Spanish fleet under Sancho d'Avila, says, "No fight hath been comparable unto it by sea these five hundred years, saving that before Sluys, fought by our famous king Edward III. against the French king and the earl of Flanders; and that of Lepanto." — *Scott's Somers' Tracts*, i. 383.

† Barnes, 185.

CHAP. V.

FROM THE BATTLE OF SLUYS TO THE DEATH OF EDWARD III.

A.D. 1340—1377.

On the night of the victory, Edward lay on board, the joyful sound of trumpets and clarions being kept up through the night. On the morrow, many of the nobles and principal burgesses of Flanders came off to visit and congratulate him: he landed that day. His first act, upon setting foot on shore, was to kneel down in thankful prayer; his next, for it was Sunday, to hear mass; and, with more solemnity, return thanks to God for his great victory. There he remained during the morrow; and knighting a squire, by name Nele Loring, for his distinguished services in the action, made a grant of 20*l.* a year to him and his heirs male for ever. No doubt, other honours were conferred, and other rewards given; but this happens to have been remembered.* On the Tuesday, he went on foot to the church of Onser Lieve Vrouw of Ardenburg; the image of the Virgin Mary, which was there worshipped, being the most celebrated for its miracles of any upon the coast of Flanders. For this reason the men of Bruges used to suspend the trophies of their victories in her church; Philip had done so when he over-ran Flanders, and Edward† now devoutly performed the same proud ob-

* The persons whose names are recorded as having borne a part in this great victory, are Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, the admiral (though for that day the king took the office upon himself); sir Thomas Beauchamp, his brother; Henry Plantagenet, earl of Derby; Lawrence Hastings, earl of Pembroke; William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon; the lord Roger Northwode, of his retinue; Hugh Audley, earl of Gloucester; Humphrey Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, and William Earl of Northampton, his brother; the lords Reginald Cobham, John Chandos, William Felton, Walter Manny, Henry Piercy, John de la Warre, and Ralph Basset of Sapcote; Thomas Lucy, lord Multon: and of foreigners, Robert of Artois (a bad man), then earl of Richmond, sir Stephen de la Burken, and sir Henry of Flanders.

† Sanderus, ii. 208.

servance. Flanders was at that time under an interdict; but he had no difficulty on this account, for he had brought over with him certain bishops, and very many priests and deacons, who without scruple opened the churches, and celebrated divine service*, much to the satisfaction of the people. From thence he proceeded to Ghent, where his queen presented him with their new-born son, afterwards so well known by the name of John of Gaunt; and where, shortly afterward, that queen held at the font the infant child of Jacob von Artevald, and named him Philip after herself, . . that Philip, who, if he had died before prosperity tainted him, would have left one of the most heroic names in history.

But Edward had difficulties now to struggle with, which are not to be overcome by straight-forward courage. He had engaged in a most expensive war; his allies were looking for their subsidies; and his letter to the lords and commons expressed a fear of much damage, and especially loss of honour, unless he were supported with speedy supplies. The king was personally popular; and the war was regarded by the people with an eager national feeling that overlooked every thing, except its costs, . . then, as always, willing that any price should be paid for victory, except from their money and their goods. A great proportion of the grant consisted in wool, which was first to be taken up for the king, on the credit of the next subsidy, and then disposed of for him; if the supply had been adequate, the mode of rendering it convertible for present use required so much time, that he was compelled to borrow, for his immediate necessities, upon such ruinous terms as in that age were always exacted by those men who had money to lend. The pope at this time performed the part of a Christian mediator, urging both kings to accommodate their differences by peace; he exhorted the king of England not to be puffed up with the pride of victory; he warned him that the Flemings were a perfidious people, who had deceived their own lord, and

* Barnes, 186.

who, it might be expected would more readily deceive him; that other of his allies would serve him only as far as by so doing they could serve their own ends; and that least of all should he trust to the Germans, who were always accounted unstable, and whose instability his grandfather, the good king Edward, had experienced in the time of his uttermost need. He exhorted him also to consider the great power of the king of France, who, if he were to lose ten battles, could yet bring together men in abundance, for resisting any invader; whereas how difficult, or impossible, would it be for the king of England to repair his losses, being in a foreign country, in the hands of strangers, and not attended with his own people!

Weighty as these considerations were, they made little impression upon Edward, a young and high-minded king, and at that time flushed with the fame of the greatest naval victory that ever had been gained under the English flag; he knew also, that proposals for peace were always most urgently pressed upon him, when some great advantage was in his hands. And he would have turned a deaf ear to this representation, "had not there been a lady of high quality, and wonderful virtue and piety, whose tears and prayers," says his historian, "could not be lost upon a man whose heart was acquainted with pity." This was the lady Jeanne de Valois, countess dowager of Hainault, sister to Philip, and mother to Philippa queen of England. After the death of her husband, William the Good, she had retired into the abbey of Fontaine au Tertre. When Edward was pressing Tournay by a strait siege, and Philip exerting all his efforts for its relief, this excellent woman left for a while her religious retirement, to engage in the holy work of peace-making, upon which a blessing has been promised by the God of peace. She went assiduously, with great zeal and diligence*, between

* "As the Greek poets report of Jocasta, when Polynices and Eteocles were prepared for battle; and as our English poets relate of the mother of Belinus and Brennus, two British princes, when they were ready, by unbrotherly war, to decide the right of a kingdom."—*Barnes.* It is, indeed, the most poetical circumstance of its kind in real history.

them, "humbly kneeling to her brother, whose haughty and resolute temper she well knew, and sweetly, like a virtuous mother, intermixing, with her son-in-law, commands, and prayers, and moving tears, and convincing arguments." Being nearly connected with some of the chief confederates also, she laboured to obtain their co-operation; and at length so far prevailed, that a truce for three days was appointed, and a meeting of commissioners in a little chapel, to conclude a treaty during that suspension of arms.* She was present during the conferences, "earnestly entreating them for God's sake to lay aside all prejudice and passion, and only to consider the public good, and the weal of Christendom, and be ready to accept of what was just." By her persuasions, aided as they were by the inclinations of some of Edward's subsidiary allies, the commissioners were brought to an agreement on the second day, and on the third they concluded a truce for seven months, during which ambassadors on both sides were to meet, and, in conjunction with certain cardinals, bring about a final peace.†

It derogates nothing from the honour due to the countess Jeanne de Valois, that there was little likelihood of such a consummation. An interval of peace in such times was so much gained for humanity, .. a cessation of crimes, a respite from sufferings. But Philip had gained no credit by his conduct during the campaign; the policy which induced him to solicit a truce was less esteemed in public opinion, than the courage with which Edward had entered an enemy's country, besieged one of his great cities, and offered him battle. On the other hand, the conditions of the truce were not favourable to the king of England; and he had consented to it most unwillingly; yielding less to the urgent persuasions of his friends, and half-hearted allies, than to the necessity of his own affairs. It was

* "Thus," says Barnes, "was the strong city of Tournay wonderfully preserved from utter ruin, without battle given, only by the power of a lady's tongue, and by the providence of the Divine goodness, which even yet seemed desirous to give further warning to king Philip; and, as it were, to offer him one more opportunity for deliberation, before it would resign his kingdom up to those destructions for which already it was marked out."

† Barnes, 204.

most humiliating to him, to see himself thus deprived of a victory which he had deemed certain; and to perceive also that his German allies, on whom he had depended, were likely to fall off from him, because of the failure of his pecuniary supplies. He complained grievously of this, and imputed the fault chiefly to the archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the first place in the government had been intrusted during his absence. The primate had originally encouraged his enterprise, and engaged to provide money both for the king's necessities and the soldiers' pay; "whereupon," said Edward, "we set our hand to great undertakings, and with great expense, as it behoved, made our warlike provision, and bound ourselves in vast sums to our confederates. And being busied in the siege of Tournay, and exhausted with continual charges, we waited in daily expectation that our promised aid would at last come to relieve us in our so many and so great necessities. By many messengers and divers letters we signified the sundry inconveniences we were exposed to for want of the promised aid; as also the great advantage and honour which we might easily obtain by a seasonable supply. But for want thereof we were constrained to accept a truce, to the shameful hinderance of our enterprise, and the no small joy of our adversaries. And returning thereupon into Flanders, empty of money and full of debts, neither our own purses nor our friends' being sufficient to discharge our necessities, and to pay off our foreign auxiliaries, we were compelled to plunge ourselves into the devouring gulf of usury *, and to submit our shoulders to the burthen of intolerable obligations: our faithful friends, companions of our labour, and partakers of our troubles, saying that if we did not apply a speedy remedy, they must of necessity withdraw from our service, and go back from their alliance made with us; and this must needs redound to the subversion of our kingdom, our

* "Through defect of the archbishop's performance," says Speed, "he was not only constrained to give over his hold for the present, but to embog himself in the bankers' and usurers' books." p. 574.

own perpetual infamy, and the eternal reproach of the English nation, .. which God, our merciful Father, of his infinite goodness forbid to come to pass in our days!"*

A.D. 1341. It was less of the parsimony with which supplies had been granted that he complained, than of the negligence with which they had been collected and transmitted. With regard to the defects of administration, more, no doubt, must be ascribed to inexperience and unforeseen difficulties, than to any neglect of duty. In the course of English history many mournful reflections must be excited in the thoughtful reader, when he perceives how great an after-expenditure of treasure and of blood has been occasioned by ill-timed parsimony in war. But in this case there was no eventual evil. Having waited in vain for remittances, the king left Ghent privately, and embarked from one of the ports in Zeeland, with his queen, late in November: they encountered such weather upon the passage, that they were for three days and nights in imminent danger; and it is not unworthy of notice, that there were writers who ascribed this storm to the spells of French necromancers employed by Philip, in the hope of either drowning the king, or "abating his courage for taking the sea again." †

He had not been long in England, before his serious attention was called to the insults, outrages, and havoc committed upon the sea-coast, and, as it appears, in other parts also, by pirates, by his enemy the French king, and those who favoured and assisted him; for it seems that this species of hostility continued notwithstanding the truce. The evils inflicted by this barbarous warfare are complained of in terms ‡ that bring to mind the

* Barnes, 197, 198. 213. 220.

† Fabyan, 454. The honest citizen delivers this as the opinion of others, without declaring his own. Barnes repeats it, and adds,—"Whatever was the occasion, this is certain, that as if king Edward had been only destined for the kingdom of France, which he so greatly desired, it seemed fatal for him always, in his passage thither, to have calm seas and wind at will, but on his return, all things contrary; so that often he endured many great losses and shipwrecks. And this was his fate while his fortune stood fair; but when he began to decline, he found the wind so contrary to him, that by no means he could once set his foot more in France." p 212.

‡ "Quanta incendia, strages, et dispendia, et alia mala et facinora, non sine scandalo et opprobrio nostri et totius regni nostri Angliæ, in cæteris

times of Sweyne and the Vikingr. His first precautionary measure was to make a league * between his subjects of the Cinque Ports and of the city of Bayonne, with whom it may be inferred the Cinque Ports men had not been upon more amicable terms than they used to be with their eastern countrymen. A circular order was also sent to all the English ports, wherein, . . after complaining that if their ships had been made ready, pursuant to former orders, in due time, for seeking and meeting the enemy, the great damage which had been done, and the reproach which had been brought upon the kingdom, might have been prevented, . . he commanded them immediately to equip for service every vessel of sixty tons burthen and upwards ; and he summoned one or two deputies from every port, according to its importance, to meet in London, and there give to him and his council such information as might be required.†

The character of the nation had indeed suffered by the impunity with which its coasts were insulted; and by the conclusion of the last campaign, notwithstanding the brilliant naval victory wherewith it had opened. Six Genoese galleys, laden with goods for Flanders, and provided with passports from the constable of Bourdeaux, and with Edward's own letters of safe-conduct, were attacked and burnt by some English ships. The doge, Simon Bocanegra, sent ambassadors to require reparation, promising, that if this were promptly and fully rendered, he and his people would no longer afford any assistance to the French, and would abstain from all offensive acts against England. The reply to this was, that the galleys had never produced or pleaded their letters of protection, but had shown rather a hostile spirit : that those letters were only conditional, . . engaging for friendly treatment, in case their countrymen, the Genoese, ceased to act as enemies, . . not otherwise : that this notoriously

maris, et alibi." — (*Rymer*, ii. part ii 1150.) Elsewhere, damna et gravamina inæstimabilia are spoken of. Ibid.

* Rymer, ii. part ii. 1150. † Ibid.

was not the case; the Genoese were aiding the king's enemies with all their strength, and had invaded England, and done infinite damage to the English; no truce had been proclaimed on their part when they were met with; and, therefore, under these circumstances, it was lawful to attack them. Nevertheless, for the sake of the old good will which had existed between England and Genoa, the king consented to pay 10,000*l.*, for which he engaged that certain merchants in Flanders should give sufficient security. But this the ambassadors peremptorily refused to accept: they made no objection to the amount, but insisted upon having plate or jewels in pledge; and when this was refused, they demanded, and in no friendly spirit, received their letters of dismissal. All this was stated in the king's name to the doge, in a calm and temperate letter wherein Edward said, that neither his power, nor the hand of the Lord, were so weakened, but that he trusted, by the grace of the Lord, and the justice of his own cause, to prevail against his enemies. The doge, however, was finally assured, that it would be more agreeable to the king if his offer were accepted, and the old relations of amity resumed.* On the part of England, there was an evident desire that the matter should be adjusted, not from regard to any mercantile relations, but in consideration of the naval means which the Genoese employed against her: on their part, they seem to have found the predatory warfare so gainful, that they protracted the dispute.

A.D. 1342. In the ensuing year, a fleet of galleys attacked and burnt Portsmouth, and, continuing upon that coast, threatened Southampton and the adjacent country; immediate measures, therefore, were taken for its defence, and the whole force of the country was ordered to hold itself in readiness, no man absenting himself from the needful duty, on pain of forfeiting all that he had to forfeit.† Edward wanted no such continued provocations to make him eager for the first opportunity of renewing the war

* Rymer, ii. part ii. 1156. 1211. † Rymer, ii. part ii. 1210.

upon the Continent; and that opportunity occurred when the succession to the dukedom of Bretagne was disputed between John earl of Montford and sir Charles de Blois. As in the contrariant claims to the crown of France each claimant believed his own title to be good, so was it in this case. Sir Charles was the French king's nephew; the king espoused his cause, in despite of the Salic law, for he claimed it in his mother's right; and Montford, who had forcibly taken possession, and knew himself unable to withstand the power of France, came over to England, and offered to hold his dukedom of Edward as true king of France, by fealty and homage, for him and his heirs for ever. The offer was accepted; and Edward engaged to defend him as his liegeman against either Philip or any other who should disturb him in his possession. This transaction was meant to have been kept secret till such protection should become necessary: Philip, however, obtained intelligence of it. Montford was surprised in Nantes, and sent prisoner to the Louvre; and his countess, Margaret, was besieged in Hennebon, from whence she sent to solicit aid from England. A force consisting of 6000 archers and 620 men-at-arms, under sir Walter Manny, was despatched with all speed to her relief. No time was lost in setting forth; but the weather was so stormy and adverse, that he was detained the almost incredible time of forty days upon the passage; and if the place had not been defended by the countess herself, the succour must have arrived too late.

This remarkable woman, who was sister to the earl of Flanders, is described as having had the courage of a man and the heart of a lion. When her husband was made prisoner, she lost none of that courage, but went about to all the fortresses and towns that espoused his cause, carrying with her her little son, and showing him to the soldiers and the people; thus winning their affections, and securing their fidelity, as far as it was to be secured, by "paying every man well and truly his wages." Hennebon, on the river Blavet, was, at that

time, the strongest castle in all Bretagne, "standing," says Froissart, "on a port of the sea, and the sea running about it in great dykes." When sir Charles of Blois had taken Rennes, he was advised to lay siege to it, seeing that if he could get the countess and her son into his hands, the war would be at an end. Accordingly, he encamped before it, within a quarter of a mile of the town, besieging both it and the castle on all sides, except where the castle was open to the sea; for he had no ships. The place was well stored, and well manned. In their first attack upon the barriers, the assailants were repulsed with considerable loss; and when, on the third day of the siege, they made a brave assault, they were so bravely driven back, that "the lords of France were sore displeased, and caused the assault to begin again more fiercer than it was before." The countess herself, clad in armour, and mounted on a great courser, rode from street to street, encouraging the men; and she made the women cut short their kirtles, and carry stones and pots of quicklime to the walls, thence to be cast down upon the enemies. She herself ascended a tower, to see in what manner the French had disposed their force; perceiving that they had left their camp unguarded, she hastened down, collected about 300 horse, and, putting herself at their head, sallied through a gate which was not assaulted, and, dashing into the camp, cut down and set fire to their tents and pavilions. None but varlets and pages had been left there: at the outcry which they raised the lords of France looked back; and, seeing their tents blazing, called off their men from the assault, with the cry of "Treason! treason!" The countess saw now that her return was intercepted, and that she could not, without the greatest danger, attempt to recover the town: gathering together, therefore, her company, she made for Brest, about seven leagues distant, where the people were on her side. The marshal of the host, don Luis de la Cerda, pursued with a greater number of horse, and slew or wounded several who were not well

mounted; but the countess and the greater part of her company rode so well, that they gained Brest, and there they were joyfully received.*

The besiegers, having lost most of their tents and provisions, hutted themselves nearer the town, in bowers made of branches; and "mightily they marvelled," when they heard that it was the countess herself who had headed this daring exploit. The besieged, on their part, were less rejoiced at the success of that exploit, than troubled for her absence: what had become of her they knew not, and they remained five days in this uncertainty; but no suspicion could be entertained that she had abandoned them, or that she would not, if she were still living, exert herself to the utmost for their deliverance. By her exertions some 500 men-at-arms were added to her company: with these she left Brest at midnight, and, about sunrise, passing unperceived on one side of the enemy's camp, came safely to the gate from whence she had sallied. The trumpets and clarions, with the rejoicing sounds of which she entered, roused the French host. Provoked at this exultation, and at their own want of vigilance, they made a fierce assault, and continued it till noon before they were beaten off. This failure convinced them that the place was not to be taken by mere force of personal courage: a council was held, and it was determined, that, while sir Charles of Blois went with one part of the army to besiege Auray, upon the Morbihan, don Luis with the other should remain before Hennebon, and employ such means against it as the art of engineering in that age could supply. Accordingly, they sent to Rennes for twelve great engines; and with these they cast huge stones into the town and castle day and night: they battered the walls also till they were so shaken and breached in parts, that the hearts of the besieged began to fail. Sir Henry de Leon, who was the first person of rank that had declared in favour of Montford, but had afterwards gone over to the other party upon some disgust, was one of the principal

* Froissart, chap. 80. Barnes, 257.

persons in the besieging army. His uncle, the bishop of St. Pol de Leon, was in the town, and very much disposed in mind to take the same course, which might be done with more credit to himself, if he could persuade the people to capitulate, and obtain, through his nephew, an assurance that both their persons and property should be safe. After a conference with sir Henry, in which, as far as on them depended, it had been thus arranged, the bishop re-entered the town. The countess was then in council with her lords and knights; and, suspecting what had been the object of the bishop's conference, she conjured them, for the love of God, to take heart and hold out yet a little longer, saying, she felt confident that, within three days, the long-hoped for succours from England would arrive; a confidence which the change of weather had rendered reasonable. But the bishop argued earnestly upon the imprudence and the danger of rejecting favourable terms. Their opinions were so divided, and their minds so perplexed, that they came to no decision that day; after long irresolution and debate, the timid part is that which is usually taken; when the council met in the morning, an inclination that way was manifested; and, if sir Henry had been close at hand, and alert to seize the opportunity, the place would have been yielded to him. Seeing this, the countess withdrew in despair to a window which commanded the sea-view; and, springing back with an emotion of sudden joy, she exclaimed, "I see the succours of England! . . the succours of England! There is the cross of St. George! God has heard our prayers: He has heard us!" The lords ran presently to the window, and the people to the walls and to the high tower, and saw, indeed, "a great number of ships, great and small, freshly decked, making up to the port; and they knew it to be the English succours, which, having been detained above forty days by reason of contrary winds, came happily now in the very golden opportunity to save the countess and the town.*

* Froissart, chap. 80. Barnes, 259.

When the seneschal of Guingamp, sir Pierce of Treguier, sir Galeran of Landernau, and the other Breton lords and knights, saw that their succours were indeed approaching, they said to the bishop, "Sir, you may leave off this treaty; for we are not content, at present, to follow your counsel!" To which the bishop replied, "Then, sirs, we must now part company; for I will betake me to him that, as me seemeth, hath most right." Upon this he left the town; and, sending a defiance to the countess and all her abettors, as a declared enemy, joined his nephew, and was by him presented to don Luis, and afterwards to Charles of Blois. Orders were given that the engines should renew their battery, and cast stones, without intermission, day and night. Meantime "the countess dressed up halls and chambers to receive the lords and captains of England that were coming, and sent out right nobly to welcome them in the haven at their landing; and, when they were aland, she herself went forth to meet them, and showed, all along, great respect to the captains, and feasted them the best she might, and gave them hearty thanks, and lodged all the knights and others at their ease in the castle and the town." The next day she made them a great feast at dinner in the castle. All night and all that morning the engines had never ceased to cast. When dinner was ended, sir Walter Manny, who had enquired into the state of the town and of the besieging army, said, "Sirs, I have a great desire to issue out and break down this great engine that standeth so near us, if any will follow me." Sir Pierce of Treguier instantly exclaimed, that he would not fail him on this his first adventure; sir Galeran answered to the same brave purport: they armed themselves immediately, and went out privily at a postern, with 300 archers, and some 40 men-at-arms. The archers shot so thick together, that they who were in charge of the engine fled; and the men-at-arms, coming after the archers, slew many of those who fled, and with their axes beat down the engine, and demolished it. Not satisfied with

this, they ran in among the tents and lodgings, set fire in divers places, and laid about them, smiting and slaying, till the whole camp was in a movement; then putting themselves in order, they began to withdraw "fair and easily." The enemy followed with all the impatience of irritated bravery: upon which, seeing their eagerness, sir Walter said aloud, "Let me never be beloved of my lady, if I do not have a course with one of these pursuers!" His companions were not slow in following his example: they encountered the foremost pursuers; and "then," says Froissart, "might well have been seen legs turned upward." A "sore medley followed; those from the camp increasing continually, and those from the town retreating steadily, sir Walter showing himself not less discreet as a captain than valiant as a knight, and fighting in the rear of his men as they retired to the ditches: there he planted archers on each flank; and made a stand, with his choice captains around him, till he saw the rest in safety. By this time all the men-of-arms in the town came forth to support their friends, and more archers ranged themselves on each side of the dyke; till the enemy, finding it vain to make any further attempt, thought it prudent to draw off; and the English then re-entered the fortress safe and victoriously." The countess had seen the whole of this affair from the high tower. She descended now, and "came forth of the castle with a glad cheer; and, meeting sir Walter Manny and his captains in the street, she came and kissed them," says Froissart, "one after another, two or three times, like a valiant lady."*

This exploit of the English and their Breton friends took from the enemy all hope of winning Hennebon: their largest engine had been destroyed; their army weakened both in numbers and in spirit, and the besieged strengthened alike in both. They broke up the siege on the following day, and joined Charles of Blois before Auray; but as Charles had with him already a force sufficient for that service, he sent don Luis to besiege Dinant. Don Luis de la Cerda, whose sub-

* Froissart, chap. 81. Barnes, 259, 260.

sequent career connects these operations in Bretagne with the naval history of England, is called don Luis of Spain by the French chroniclers; to whom, indeed, his actions belong more than to the historians of the country of his fathers. He was of royal descent, and allied to the royal families of Castille, Aragon, and France; but probably by birth a Fleming, his mother possessing large domains in Flanders. His father, don Alonso el Desheredado, had been governor of Languedoc for king Charles the Fair; and he himself had lately held the office of admiral of France.* Of his maritime services before this time no account seems to have been preserved; nor, indeed, has his reputation as a naval commander been in any degree proportionate to his merits in that character: the English coasts were not assailed by any other enemy so able and so enterprising from the times of Hastings to those of Tromp and de Ruyter.

On the way to Dinant, don Luis de España attacked a castle called Comper: the assault lasted from evening till midnight: he renewed it in the morning. The ditches were not so deep but that they could be passed by wading. His men succeeded in approaching the wall; made a breach there, and put the garrison to the sword, their commander alone excepted: this done, he garrisoned it with threescore chosen men, and proceeded to Dinant. Meantime a messenger from Comper had borne tidings to Hennebon that the castle was attacked; and the countess expressed a wish to sir Walter Manny that it might be relieved: upon which he drew out most of the forces from the town, and set off at day-break, with the hope of giving battle to don Luis. Making good speed, he came thither about noon, and had the vexation then to find that it was occupied by a garrison of French and Spaniards. "Sirs," said he to his people, "I am not in the mind to depart from hence till I see what company are in yonder castle, and how they came there." So he began the assault, and the

* Garibay, ii. 903. Salazar y Castro, Hist. General de la Casa de Lara, i. 192. Mem. Hist. del Rei Don Alonso el Sabio, por el Marques de Mondejar, 640.

garrison stood stiffly to their defence. The English archers did their part well, as they were ever wont to do; the ditch, meantime, was gauged with spears, and found fordable: the men-at-arms crossed it: they entered at the breach, which had not yet been well repaired; and ten of the garrison were all who were spared in the heat of their vengeance. Sir Walter then perceiving that the place was not tenable, set it on fire, and returned to Hennebon, not thinking it prudent to go farther from that fortress, now that he had almost drained it of men.*

Don Luis de España in the mean time laid siege to Dinant, a place not otherwise fortified than by a palisade, by its position on the river Rance, and by a marsh. After failing in an attack, he got together some small vessels, which enabled him to threaten it as well by water as by land; the townsmen then called upon their young commander, sir Reginald of Dinant, to surrender; and when the high-spirited youth declared that he would commit no such disloyalty while the place was capable of being defended, they butchered him in the market-place, and admitted the besiegers. Having garrisoned it, don Luis made for Guerande, a large town on the sea-coast, situated in some salt marshes between the mouths of the Vilaine and the Loire. Several merchant ships were lying there, which had come laden with wine from Poictou and Rochelle: the merchants were come to an unhappy market, for don Luis seized their ships, and all that he found therein; and, having manned them, on the following day he attacked the place both by sea and land. The besieged could not make good their defence on both sides at once; the place, therefore, was carried by force, . . *lightly* carried, it is said, . . and yet, such were the usages of war in those days, which were yet the best days of chivalry, that all the people therein were put to the sword without mercy, men, women, and children. While the work of plunder and massacre was going on, five churches were robbed and set on fire: don Luis had no compunctious feelings of hu-

* Froissart, chap. 82. Barnes, 260.

manity; but he was shocked at sacrilege, and ordered four-and-twenty of the ruffians in his service to be hanged for this offence. Guerande was a town of great traffic, and his men found more plunder there than they could bear away. After this success, "they wist not whither to go;" but as havoc and spoil were still his objects, don Luis embarked, with his Spaniards and Genoese, in the ships that he had taken, and went coasting along, to see what damage he could do, and what purchase he could find. So sailing forth till he came to that part of the province called *Bretagne Bretonant*, or British Britany, because the British or Armorican dialect of the Keltic tongue prevailed there, he entered the haven of Quimperlay, near Quimpercorentin: there he landed, and wasted the country with fire and sword, as if his intention was not to obtain possession of it for Charles de Blois, but to inflict upon it all the evils of the most merciless warfare. The booty he sent on board, while he proceeded farther into the land, ravaging all around.*

When this intelligence reached Hennebon, sir Walter Manny and sir Aymery de Clisson thought that a favourable opportunity was here afforded them for striking a blow against this part of the enemy's force. They embarked with 3000 archers and a competent number of men-at-arms, sailed to Quimperlay, and finding don Luis's ships there, boarded them, and put their crews to the sword. They found in them such riches, that "they had marvel thereof." Leaving 300 archers to protect the prizes, and also his own fleet, sir Walter landed, and marched in quest of don Luis; dividing his force into three bodies, that the enemy might not escape him, but moving them at no great distance from each other, so that all should be within reach of sure support. In this manner he advanced, having given order to burn such places as had owned Charles de Blois. Don Luis, as soon as he heard that there were foes at hand, drew all his men together, and

* Froissart, chap. 83, 84. Barnes, 261, 262.

began to retreat toward his ships, not knowing what had befallen them. On the way he fell in with one of the three English battles: he prepared cheerfully to fight, seeing that he had greatly the advantage in numbers; and, in the expectation of victory, he made several new knights upon the field, among whom was his nephew don Alonso. This done, the Spaniards and Genoese "set on fiercely:" many of the English were overthrown on the first rencounter; and they were in danger of being overpowered, if the two other battalions had not been directed thither in good time by the cry of the country people, who, having good reason to hate the first invaders, looked upon the second as their deliverers. The fight then became fiercer: the archers of England "shot so wholly together" (for this is the phrase by which the steadiness and regularity with which their volleys were discharged is expressed), that the enemy could no longer keep their array; and when once they were discomfited, and began to fly, the peasantry "fell on with prongs, and staves, and stones, and slew, without mercy, all on whom they could lay hands." It is said that of 6000 men scarcely 300 escaped. Don Alonso was among the slain: his uncle don Luis did not escape without several wounds; and when he reached the haven, he found the English archers in possession of his ships, and thought himself fortunate in getting, with great jeopardy, on board a small but swift bark, and sailing away as fast as he could.*

Sir Walter, when he heard of his escape, embarked in the swiftest of his ships, and with all speed pursued, leaving the expedition to re-embark, and follow him. But the Spaniard had the start, and sailed so well, that, before they could come up with him, he had landed at Redon, on the Vilaine, the port of Rennes; and this he did just in time to mount himself and his people on such horses as they could find, and set out with all speed for Rennes, just as the English reached the shore: those of his party who were worst mounted fell into

* Froissart, chap. 84. Barnes, 262.

the hands of the pursuers. Turning back from the pursuit, sir Walter remained that night at Redon, and in the morning, going again on board, sailed for Hennebon; but being driven by contrary winds, he was fain to land about three leagues from Dinant; and leaving his ships there, with a sufficient force for their protection, to make their way to port when the weather would permit, he took such horses as he could get, some of them without saddles, and so scouring the country came to a castle called Rosternan. Looking at the place with that seaman-like spirit of adventure in which military operations were in that age carried on, he said to his companions, "Sirs, if our company were not so sore travelled, I would give an assault to this castle." . . "Set on, sir, at your pleasure!" was the reply; "for we shall not forsake you, though we die in the quarrel." So to the assault they went with better will than fortune. Sir Gerard de Morlaix, who was captain there, made a brave defence; and many of the assailants were grievously wounded. Among others, two valiant knights, sir John Butler and sir Matthew Trelawny, were sore hurt; and they were carried aside into a meadow hard by, and there laid, to have their wounds looked to, while the assault was continued.*

Now there was a little fortress near at hand called Le Favoet, of which Regnè de Morlaix, a brother of sir Gerard, was captain. This sir Regnè, hearing of his brother's danger, set out, with forty spears, to his assistance; and coming, by the side of a wood, to the meadow where the wounded were laid, he easily made them his prisoners, and led them to his castle hurt as they were. The obvious motive for this was to secure for himself their ransom, as a windfall which had come in his way; but, as it happened, he could not in any other manner have so effectually relieved Rosternan. For those who had been left in care of the wounded carried the tidings to sir Walter; and he instantly caused the assault to cease, and hastened toward Favoet

* Froissart, chap. 84. Barnes, 262.

with all his forces, in hope of resquing his friends. They had been carried into the castle before he could come up: he and his men, weary as they were, set upon the place; but, because a gallant defence was made, and it began to be late, they desisted for the night, resolving to renew the attempt on the morrow. During the night sir Gerard, knowing that the danger from which he was delivered had now been drawn upon his brother, rode, without any companion, to Dinart; and, arriving there before daybreak, entreated the commander, who was his old friend and companion in arms, to assist him in this emergency. The burgesses were assembled in the common hall; and sir Gerard, with the commander's assistance, persuaded them, "in such wise, that they were content to go forth," and so armed themselves, and went towards Favoet, making up a body of some 6000 men. Just as sir Walter was about to renew the assault, one of his espials brought him intelligence of this movement. He and his knights then counselled together, and considered that "it were great danger for them, if the men of Dinant should come on them on one side, and sir Charles de Blois on the other, whereby they might be surrounded;" and they agreed that it behoved them to make their way directly, and with all speed, to Hennebon, and leave their companions in prison till another time, "when they might amend it." It was more easy for sir Walter Manny to make such a resolution than strictly to adhere to it. They came to a castle on their return, called Gony in the Forest, which the garrison had treacherously delivered up to Charles de Blois about a fortnight before. In his indignation against men who had thus betrayed so strong a place, sir Walter halted, and declared, with a loud voice, that, "weary as he was, he would go no farther till he had given an assault to that castle, and tried the demeanour of those within, whether they had as much courage as they had shown falsehood." So a fierce assault began: the besieged were not backward in defending themselves,

knowing what they had to expect if they were overcome. Sir Walter encouraged his men, and was ever one of the foremost: the archers shot so quickly, and so close together, that none durst appear at the battlements; within a while the ditch was in one part filled with turfs and wood, and the pioneers, under cover of the archers, approached the wall with pickaxes and other instruments: a breach was thus made, through which the men-at-arms entered perforce, and slew all whom they found within. They lodged there that night, and on the morrow returned to Hennebon. "And when the countess," says Froissart, "heard of their coming, she came and met them, and kissed them, and made them great cheer, and caused all the noblemen to dine with her in the castle."*

The English succours had saved Hennebon, and had destroyed the Spanish and Genoese land-force; but Charles de Blois had made great progress in conquering the province, and was continually strengthened by French aid; wherefore the countess and sir Walter sent advices to king Edward, praying for a greater force, and saying, that unless it were sent, sir Charles would be likely to bear down all before him. This chief, meantime, having taken Carhaix, after a long siege, determined once more to invest Hennebon, though he knew its strength, and also that it was abundantly provided; but it was now almost the only important place which he had not reduced, and "there lay the head of the war, .. the countess and her son." So thither he went, and sate down before the town. The fourth day after this second siege began don Luis de España joined the camp, having been confined six weeks in the city of Rennes by his wounds. He was joyfully welcomed by Charles de Blois, and by the army; "for he was a knight much honoured and well beloved among them." His wounds, indeed, were healed; but his defeat, and, still more, the loss of his nephew, rankled in his heart;

* Froissart, Chron. 85, 86. Barnes, 2[illegible].

and that sore feeling was inflamed by the taunts of the garrison, which, though not directed against him personally, were by him felt and resented as if they were. The enemy had again planted their engines, fifteen or sixteen in number, "which cast into the town many a great stone:" but the townsmen little regarded this, for they had provided against it by means of woolpacks, and other such devices; and they would sometimes come to the walls, and, in derision, wipe the place against which a stone had struck, and call out to the besiegers, "Go, messieurs, and seek up your company who lie in the fields of Quimperlay!"*

Excellently brave as don Luis was, there was as little sense of generosity in his heart as of compassion: he had in him the obduracy of the Spanish character, without its redeeming virtues. Going one day into the tent of sir Charles de Blois, he asked of him, in the presence of several great lords of France, a boon, in requital for all the services that he had ever done him. Sir Charles, who was greatly bound to him, and could not suspect that any thing unworthy would be asked, readily promised to grant it. "Then, sir," said don Luis, "I require you to cause the two knights who are in prison at Favoet, namely, sir John Butler and sir Matthew Trelawny, to be brought hither, and given to me, that I may do with them at my pleasure. Sir, this is the boon that I desire of you! They have chased, discomfited, and hurt me, and slain my nephew Alonso. And I know no better way to be revenged of these Englishmen, who have done me all this mischief, than to strike off the heads of these two knights before the town, in sight of their companions." Charles de Blois, who, being distinguished for the better feelings of chivalry, was astonished at such a declaration, made answer, . . "Certes, don Luis, I will give you the prisoners with a right good will, since you have desired them; but surely it should be a shameful deed so to

* Froissart, chap. 86. Barnes, 264.

put to death two such valiant knights; and it would be an occasion for our enemies to deal in like wise with any of ours who may fall into their hands; and we know not what shall happen. The chances of war are divers. Wherefore I entreat you, fair cousin, be better advised." Don Luis sullenly replied to this: . . "Sir, if ye keep not promise with me, know this, for truth, that I shall depart out of your company, and neither serve nor love you again while I live!" Seeing him thus peremptory, sir Charles sent to Favoet for the two English knights; and early the next morning they were brought to his tent. Once more sir Charles renewed his request in their behalf; but don Luis was not to be dissuaded: he swore, by God and Santiago, that they should both lose their heads after dinner in sight of the town; and in the days of chivalry a boon once granted was held to be irrevocable, whatever might be the consequence, like Herod's promise to the daughter of Herodias.*

In every age, however rude the art of war may have been, the system of espionage has been carried on, . . and they who pay well for such service are always well served. All that had past concerning these prisoners was faithfully reported to sir Walter Manny, by one of his espials, and he was apprised also of the exact hour at which they were to suffer. Upon this he called together those in whom he confided most, and took counsel with them what might best be done. Some thought one thing, some thought another; but they wist not what remedy to find, for the enemy's force was too great to be encountered in plain field by those of the town. At length, sir Walter himself said, "Sirs, it would be great honour to us if we might deliver yonder two knights from this danger; and if we put it in adventure, even though we should fail thereof, yet king Edward, our master, will 'con us much thank,' and so will all other noble men who shall hear of the case hereafter; at least, it will be said, that we did our devoir. Sirs, this is my advice, if ye will follow it; for methinks a

* Froissart, chap 87. Barnes, 264.

man should well adventure his body to save the lives of two such valiant knights :. . let us divide ourselves into two parts ; the one incontinently to pass out at this gate, and arrange themselves on the dykes, thereby to stir the enemy and to skirmish with them. I think that all the whole host will come running thither. Sir Aymery, you shall be captain of that company, and shall take with you 6000 good tall archers, and 300 men-of-arms ; and I will take with me 100 men-of-arms, and 500 archers, and issue out at the postern covertly, and dash into the camp among their lodgings behind, the which I think we shall find as good as unguarded. I have those with me that will bring me to the tent of sir Charles de Blois, where, as I think, we shall find the two knights prisoners ; and, I ensure you, we will do our endeavour to deliver them." To this proposal they readily agreed, and forthwith prepared to put it in execution.*

About the hour of dinner, sir Aymery Clisson set open the chief gate, which looked towards the enemy, and issued out with his company. Some of them dashed suddenly into the skirts of the camp, and cut down tents, and slew and hurt divers. The camp was in a sudden uproar ; and the enemy, arming themselves in haste, hastened to drive them back again into the town, and they retired fair and softly to their main battle, not ceasing to skirmish as they thus fell back. Sir Aymery, meantime, drew up his men along the dyke without the barriers, and placed the archers on both flanks to greet the enemy with their dreadful discharge. The noise and cry was so great that all the besiegers' host drew thitherward, leaving only their pages and varlets in the camp. Sir Walter Manny, the while, sallied with his 600 men from the postern ; and, fetching a compass behind the camp, entered the lodgings of the French lords, where there were none to resist him, for all were at the skirmish. Being well guided, he made straight to the tent of sir Charles de Blois, and there he found the two

* Froissart, Chron. 87. Barnes, 265.

knights prisoners, with their hands tied behind them, those who were left about them having taken flight. Sir Walter unbound them himself, mounted them upon two good horses which he had brought with him for that purpose, gave them each a sword, and then, in all speed, without doing or receiving any hurt, returned the same way, and re-entered Hennebon with all his company, where the countess received them with great joy *; and though it is not recorded that she greeted them with her wonted salute, the omission is more likely to have been on the chronicler's part than on hers.

All this while they were still fighting before the great gate: but when the varlets who fled at the appearance of sir Walter came with tidings that the two prisoners had been rescued, don Luis immediately suspected that it was some device of sir Charles de Blois to deceive him, and disappoint his revenge; he demanded angrily which way they who made the rescue had taken? and when he was told that they were gone towards Hennebon, he retired from the assault, and went to his tent in great displeasure. Sir Charles then perceiving with what intent the sally had been made, and perhaps not altogether displeased at its result, ordered his people to draw off; and, as it fortuned, obtained in the retreat an advantage which more than compensated any mortification that he could have felt: for the sire de Landerneau and the chastellan of Guingamp pursued the retreating force so eagerly, that they were made prisoners, and brought to his tent; and there "were so preached to," that they turned to his part, and did homage to him as duke of Bretagne, having, perhaps, sought an opportunity of doing this with the least reproach. The countess lost by this two persons who had been of great importance on her side; but, on the other hand, the reputation of her brave garrison was in a high degree enhanced; insomuch that, in a day or two, sir Charles called his lords to counsel. They saw that Hennebon was in itself so strong, and so well fortified with

* Froissart, Chron. 87. Barnes, 265.

men-of-war, that they should gain little by continuing before it; the country, also, was so wasted that they wist not whither to go for forage, and winter was at hand: they resolved, therefore, upon breaking up the siege; and also, that if a truce were demanded till Whitsuntide, it should not be refused. Such a truce accordingly was soon concluded; and the countess, then accepting Edward's invitation, embarked with her son, about the middle of December, under convoy of the earl of Northampton, and arrived at Plymouth, from whence she was with all due honour conveyed to the court. "For her sake king Edward renewed those public rejoicings which were usual in his days, with his accustomed magnificence. All the Christmas holidays there were daily tournaments, running at the ring, dancings, balls, splendid collations, and princely banquets; so that the countess looked upon the court of England as another paradise. And here, for many years, her son was exercised in those honourable methods of education which fitted him for the character he was afterwards to bear, and enabled him to purchase the glorious surname of The Valiant."*

A.D. 1343. The time of the truce was actively employed in preparations on both sides. Robert of Artois, who had been created earl of Richmond, was appointed to command the succours for Bretagne: a fleet of forty-six sail, few or none being of any great burden, was collected at Southampton: he embarked there with the countess, the earls of Salisbury, Oxford, Suffolk, and Pembroke, the lords Ralph Stafford, Hugh Spencer, Bourchier, Tiptot, and other nobles. Charles de Blois was not ignorant of the object for which this armament was fitted out; and he stationed don Luis de España, with two and thirty sail, having on board 1000 men-at-arms, and 3000 Genoese cross-bowmen, to wait for them off the Isle of Guernsey. The English were long on the passage, because of contrary winds: upon approaching Guernsey they descried the enemy; and the

* Froissart, Chron. 87, 88. Barnes, 266.

seamen, who were at no loss to know what they were, pronounced them to be Genoese and Spaniards, and called upon the soldiers to arm quickly! "Then the Englishmen sounded their trumpets, and reared up their banners and standards, with their several arms and devices, together with St. George's banner, . . the red cross of England; and they set their ships in order, the archers being planted on the decks, and then, as the wind served them, they sailed forth." The vantage of numbers was on their side; but this was counterbalanced by the greater bulk of the enemy's ships, nine of them being far larger than any in the English fleet*; and there were also three large galleys†, in which were the three admirals, don Luis, Carlo Grimaldi, and Odoard Doria. When they approached each other, the Genoese, who were as celebrated in that age for the use of the cross-bow as the English were for the long, discharged their quarrels, and were answered by a discharge of arrows: "there was sore shooting between them, and many hurt on both parts." But when the lords, knights, and squires came to near quarters, where sword and spear could be used, "there was a hard fight and a cruel, and right well did they approve themselves, both the one and the other. The countess of Montford that day," says Froissart, "was well worth a man, for she had the heart of a lion; and she had in her hand a rusty but sharp sword, wherewith she fought fiercely. The enemy from their high ships threw down great bars of iron, and other weapons ‡ prepared for such service; and thus they greatly annoyed the English archers.§ This was an engagement that could not but

* Barnes calls them "Spanish carricks, high built, and greater than any one of the English."

† "Qui se remonstroient par-dessus toutes ses autres nefs." — *Froissart.*

‡ "Archegayes," Froissart calls them, which lord Berners renders pieces of timber. In Roquefort's "Glossaire de la Langue Romaine," the word is explained to mean a sort of pike or lance which the archers carried; but it is also added, that "selon Froissart c'etoit une machine de guerre qu'on jetoit sur les ennemis."

§ "But, however," says old Joshua, with an Englishman's feeling interposing what in itself is very likely, but not warranted by his author, "they stood with their arrows ready nocked, to take off whatever head appeared."

have ended with great loss on both sides if it had been carried to a close. "But the God of battles," says old Joshua, "ordered it otherwise; for the fight having begun about evening, a night came upon them so dark and dismal, that they were all forced, as it were by consent, to give over, for they could discern nothing to any purpose," so that one could scarcely know another. Hereupon they withdrew asunder, and cast anchor, but still remained in their harness, thinking to renew the battle as soon as the morning should give them light. But about midnight there arose such a storm, "as though all the world should have ended, the elements contending with as great animosity as lately the two fleets had joined. There was none so hardy then but would gladly have been a-land, the ships dashing so together that they deemed all would have riven to pieces." The lords of England then asked counsel of the mariners what was best to do; and the sailors said, they must make for the land as well as they could, for their vessels were not able to ride out such a storm: so they drew up their anchors, and bearing but a quarter sail, got safely into a little harbour not far from the city of Vannes. The Genoese and the Spaniards meantime stood out to sea, their ships being better able to abide the brunt of the waves; but if they had come near the land they would, because of their burden, have been likely to be wrecked. Thus was the battle broken off, and "no man could tell to whom to give the honour, seeing that they separated both against their wills." There must have been some abatement of the weather for a while, for the enemies fell in with four English victuallers, which had parted company from the fleet, and these they took, and "tailed them to some of their own ships:" but they must soon have left these prizes to their fate, when the storm recommenced with greater violence. Two of their fleet foundered, with all on board: on the second day, about the hour of sunrise, it became still, and they found that they were off the coast of Navarre, having been driven sixscore leagues. There,

then, they cast anchor, and waited for the tide, and when it came, the wind stood fair for Rochelle. On the way to that port, they fell in with four ships of Bayonne, homeward bound from Flanders: these they captured; and, in the brutal spirit by which don Luis de España's exploits were generally sullied, put all on board to death.*

This inhuman but indefatigable commander soon refitted his fleet, and did much damage upon the coasts of England, and intercepted the communication between that country and Bretagne. Edward himself, stung by the loss of his friend and kinsman, Robert of Artois, who had been mortally wounded at Vannes, had crossed the sea, and besieged that city: the fleet which had conveyed him lay at anchor in a little port near. Don Luis had at this time a force of eight galleys, thirteen good b[illegible]k [illegible] and thirty other vessels; and having already considerably annoyed the English by cutting off their suppl[illegible] he now made a bold attempt upon their ships in [illegible] enterprise had nearly proved as successful as it w[illegible] [illegible]y; for having slain those who were left there in defence, he had taken four vessels laden with provisions, and sunk three others with all that were therein, before a detachment from the besieging army arrived to their assistance. Lest the attempt should be repeated, Edward was advised to send part of his fleet to Brest, and the rest to Hennebon.† During the remainder of the campaign don Luis kept the seas so well, and watched the coast so narrowly, that little provision could be brought to the king's army, except with great danger; and this was one motive that induced Edward to conclude a truce for three years between England and France, and their allies.‡ This done, he embarked for England§; and meeting with that ill fortune which usually attended upon his homeward voyages, his fleet was dispersed by storms. One ship,

* Froissart, Chron. 91, 92. Barnes, 269, 270.

† Ibid. 96. Ibid. 72, 81. ‡ Ibid. 99. Ibid. 282.

§ Holinshed (ii. 636.) says, "Many of the English army returned home through France, so as to pass over by the narrow seas into England; but the king himself, with a few others, taking their ships to pass by *long seas*, were marvellously tormented by tempests."

with sir Piers Vele, his son sir Henry, and sir John Reyner on board, was lost. The countess of Montford, after great danger, reached one of the Devonshire ports. Edward himself was driven to the coast of Spain, where a Spanish fleet, "that lay cruising about those parts, made up to him; but beholding the banner royal of England," they treated him with the respect due to an allied sovereign: for though many Spaniards were serving against him under their countryman don Luis, neither he nor they were in the service of their own country.*

War was so verily the natural state of man in those turbulent ages, that no nation was free from internal commotions, unless it was engaged with a foreign foe. Both kings employed this definite interval of peace in preparing for hostilities at its termination; indeed, they had never been entirely discontinued either in Bretagne or in Guienne.† Both looked to their naval means. Philip entered into a treaty with Alonzo XI. of Castille, and engaged the Genoese Bocanegra, who was then admiral of Castille, to assist him with a fleet: he also built ships himself, and "gave free leave to any of his subjects to cut down timber for ship-building throughout his realm, whereby the sea-coast of England was afterwards not a little damnified."‡ The resources of England were not yet so available for maritime as for military service: the feudal system had made no provision for it; and the tenure upon which the sea-ports held their privileges was too irregular, and felt to be too partial in its operation, to be duly complied with. It was a matter of complaint, which, as local interests even in those early days were always well represented, passed from the ports to the parliament, that the keeping of the seas, being for the general good, was not at the general cost, and that it ought to be at the king's charge, not at that of a part of the community.§ Another coun-

* Barnes, 283. † P. Daniel, iv. part ii. 139.
‡ Fox's Acts and Monuments, i. 437. P. Daniel, iv, part ii. 141. Barnes, 292. Speed, 575.
§ Barnes, 388.

cil, or naval parliament, as it might almost be called, was convened*, and representatives were summoned from many more places than on the former convocation; none of the proceedings have been recorded: but it appears that when the Cinque-ports were called upon to furnish a certain number of ships of war, they were slow in obeying; and it was necessary to instruct their warden, who was the constable of Dover Castle, to take measures for enforcing obedience.† The treaty between France and Castille, with whatever views on the part of the former power it had been negotiated, contained nothing that should disturb the amicable relations between Castille and England; nevertheless, when so much injury had been inflicted upon the commerce of England and Aquitaine by Spanish ships, it was not to be supposed that the English and Bayonnese would always distinguish between the ships of Castille and those that were in their enemy's service: commissioners, therefore, were sent to adjust any matters of dispute which might thus have arisen.‡

The renewal of hostilities was accelerated by some acts of cruelty on the part of the French king. The Breton lord, Olivier de Clisson, had signally distinguished himself in the service of Charles de Blois; but having been taken prisoner and exchanged, Philip suspected that he had entered into some secret engagements with the king of England. Under pretence of holding a tournament, Philip invited him, with ten other persons of distinction, who were involved in the same suspicion, to Paris: they accepted the invitation, in the confidence either of innocence, or of security, and went in company of Charles de Blois; and being thus in the toils, were seized and put to death. It is most likely that the suspicion was founded on good intelligence §;

A. D. 1344

* Rymer, iii. part i. 4. † Ibid. 10. ‡ Ibid. ix. 12.

§ This is, indeed, acknowledged by Edward in his letters, "De causâ guerræ contra Philippum de Valesco, clero et populo exponendâ;" wherein, among other injuries, he complains, "de morte quorundam nobilium, nobis adhærentium, captorum per partem dicti Philippi in Britanniâ et de speciali precepto suo Parisiis ignominiosæ morti traditorum." At the same time

but no proofs were adduced: there was no trial; and in those days the bonds of allegiance were so loose, that the chief who passed from the service of one prince to another incurred little reproach; nor had there before been any instance in which such a desertion had been punished by death. This execution, therefore, was, "to the great astonishment of all men, and the infinite indignation of the nobles, whose blood, till now, was not used to be shed except in battle." The chief sufferer was a person who, for his own sake, was "greatly bemoaned." Nor was Philip contented with this punishment, unless whatever ignominy could be inflicted was superadded: Clisson's body was hanged in chains, and his head sent to Nantes, there to be fixed on a pole over the gate of the city. He left a son of his own name, who, being then a boy, was sent to England, to be bred up with the young Montford, and who lived to take such indiscriminating vengeance for his father, that he won for himself the hateful appellation of the Butcher, and no doubt gloried in deserving it. At the same time four knights of Normandy were put to death, . . it is said by famine, . . (any cruelty is credible in the history of those ages!) and their heads were sent for exposure to Carentan. The news of these executions was brought to Edward by one, whose father *, and bro-

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it is evident that he thought they had wrongfully been put to death, and had committed no punishable offence in going over to his part.

* Henry Malestroit, who was a deacon in holy orders, and master of the requests to Philip. Edward gave him "a place of good authority in the city of Vannes, which was then held of England; but shortly after, when the truce was broken, it was delivered up to the French by the two cardinals who were guarantees of the truce. There this poor gentleman being found, was sent away prisoner to Paris, where he was soon after put in a tumbrel, or dung-cart, to which he was fastened with chains of iron, and so conveyed bare-headed, with great noise and outcries of the people, from the castle down through the high street of Paris, till he came to the bishop's palace, where they delivered him up to the bishop; and he, by virtue of a commission purchased by king Philip from the pope, then and there degraded and deprived of all degrees and holy orders the said master Henry, and so delivered him back again to the secular power. Then he was judged to stand in the pillory, at such an hour, for three days together, in the most public place of the city; but he was so cruelly pelted with rotten eggs, apples, and other filth and ordure of the city, that on the third day he was found dead, and afterwards had no better burial than a dog." — *Barnes.*

ther, and cousin, were among the sufferers; and as they had been put to death for having secretly become his friends, he was urged to consider this act of the French king as a violation of the truce, and on that ground to renew the war. Edward's first impulse was an unworthy one. Sir Henry de Leon was a prisoner in his hands: the suspicion against Clisson rested in part upon the circumstance of his having been exchanged instead of this chief; and for that reason, perhaps, as well as for that sir Henry was the person by whose means Montford had been captured, Edward, in his "deep indignation at this inveterate malice of the French king," was minded to put him to death as an act of reprisal; but his cousin, the earl of Derby, a man not less generous than valiant, showed to him before his council such reasons as assuaged his anger, or at least gave it a more righteous direction. "Sir," said he, "though king Philip in his haste hath done so felonious a deed as to put to death these worthy knights, yet do not you blemish your valour by any such act! Your prisoner ought not to suffer for that fault: but rather you should put him to a reasonable ransom." Edward was a king whose sternest purposes gave way when his sense of honour or of humanity was appealed to. He sent immediately for the prisoner, and said to him, "Ah, sir Henry, sir Henry! mine adversary, Philip de Valois, shown his felony in putting to death such knights, wherewith I am sore displeased, seeing that he hath hath done it in despite of us; and if I regarded only his felony, I should serve you in like manner, for ye have done to me and mine more displeasure in Bretagne than any other person. But I will suffer it, and let him do his worst; for I will keep mine honour as I can. And for my cousin of Derby's sake, who hath entreated me for you, I am content that you should come to a light ransom, so you will do as I shall require you." Sir Henry expressed his readiness to accept the conditions. Then said the king, "I know well ye be one of the richest knights in Bretagne, and that if I chose to

press you, you could pay 30,000 or 40,000 crowns.* But you shall go to mine adversary Philip de Valois, and say to him from me, that since he hath so shamefully put to death these valiant knights in my despite, I affirm, and will make it good, that he hath broken the truce taken between me and him; wherefore I, on my part, renounce it also, and defy him from this day forth. So ye will do this message, your ransom shall be but 10,000 crowns, which ye shall send to Bruges within fifteen days after you have past the sea. And, moreover, you shall say to all knights and squires of those parts, that notwithstanding what has thus happened they need not forbear from coming to our feast at Windsor; for we would gladly see them there, and they shall have sure and safe conduct to return fifteen days after the feast."†

Sir Henry promised faithfully to perform these conditions. He embarked at Southampton for Harfleur; but being tost about in tempestuous weather for more than a fortnight, and compelled to throw his horses overboard, he suffered so much on the passage, that he never recovered from it. At length he landed at Crotoy, in the mouth of the river Somme, from whence he and his people, having no means of conveyance, proceeded on foot to Abbeville. They were mounted there; but this exertion left him in so bad a condition, that he was fain to be carried to Paris in a litter: there he "did his message from point to point;" and as he was returning homeward into Bretagne, died by the way at Angiers, just upon the borders of his own country: "a very noble and valiant, but unfortunate gentleman," says Joshua Barnes, "who never had any rest or comfort after he had betrayed his master, John of Montford." . . "God assoile his soul," says Froissart.

By this time the enmity between the kings of England and France had acquired the bitterness of personal

* The *ecu* or scute was then 6s. 8d.
† Froissart, Chron. 99. 101. Barnes, 300.

animosity. Philip may have been irritated by this defiance; but it could neither increase his willingness for war, nor add any new impulse to the preparations for it, which he was making on all sides. Among other persons he applied to don Luis de España, who happened to have at that time a singular opportunity of covertly equipping an armament for his service. Some ten or fifteen years before *, the Canary Islands had been accidentally discovered by a French ship, which was driven thither by stress of weather. Don Luis being at Avignon, as one of the ambassadors of the French king, prevailed on pope Clement VI. to create him, in public consistory, sovereign of these newly found lands, by the title of "Prince of the Fortunate Islands," on condition that he should cause the inhabitants to be converted, hold his principality as a fief under the popes, and render annually a certain tribute; "A gift," says Walsingham, "which would have proved worthy of acceptance, if his holiness could also have given a peaceable and quiet possession thereof." In the letters by which this grant was conferred, the pope took for a motto this text, "I will make thee a prince over a great nation." The English ambassadors, who were then at Avignon, are said in their ignorance to have concluded that the pope had hereby designed him to be prince of the British isles, as being among the most fortunate islands in the world; and it is added, that under this belief they secretly left Avignon, and made all speed home with their intelligence. But, in truth, the recent discovery of the Canaries was no secret, neither was the ancient appellation which had been applied to them unknown. The pope was better affected towards France than England; and these ambassadors, when they learnt that don Luis was raising forces in his own and the pope's name throughout France, Italy, and Spain,

* Between the years 1326 and 1334. Glass's History of the Discovery and Conquest of the Canary Islands, p. 1. A very good book by a most meritorious author, whose tragic fate called forth a singular example of the force of religious principles in his father, the founder of the Glassites or Sandemanians.

divined, which indeed was the case, that they were intended against England.*

During the truce, John de Montford, in conformity to one of its stipulations, had been released from prison; but on condition that he should neither go into Bretagne, nor in any way interfere with the affairs of that duchy. This condition, as having been extorted from him, he made no scruple of breaking; and, effecting his escape to England, he required aid of king Edward for recovering what he deemed his right. A considerable force was raised for this purpose, with which he sailed about Midsummer; and having won and sacked Dinant, laid siege to Quimperlay; but being seized with a calenture, or burning fever, he died † shortly afterwards, "leaving the management of his pretensions to the conduct of his virago lady and his young son John." His death had the effect of changing the direction of the English force, most of the English passing into Gascony, that being a scene where their presence was then more needed. The enemy's preparations, indeed, were such, both by sea and land, as called for great vigilance and great exertions on Edward's part. Philip was endeavouring not only to animate the Scotch to an invasion of England, but to excite troubles in England itself. Orders ‡, therefore, were given for enforcing the statute of Edward I. § against all persons who should "be so

A.D. 1345.

1346.

* Bzovius, xiv 963. Hakewill's Apology, 247 Heylyn's Cosmography, 1005 Barnes, 302. This last industrious author rightly ascribes to the sagacity of the ambassadors what others had imputed to their ignorance. — "Du Chesne himself," he adds, "confesses that all this was really intended against king Edward; though, being a Frenchman, he qualifies the matter, saying it was only in order to resist the new war, which was lately threatened by the mouth of sir Henry de Leon."

† "One reports," says Joshua Barnes, "that this earl died distracted, many devils appearing at his departure, and that, at the time of his death, such a multitude of ravens settled upon the house wherein he lay, that it was thought the whole kingdom of France could not have yielded such a number. As for his being distracted, I shall not stand to question that; since, in a burning fever, many a good man may suffer a delirium, and God forbid that we should always judge hardly thereupon; but for this horrid apparition it seems to me not so credible. Nor could I ever find any great evil of this earl, except that now he broke his word with king Philip, who was yet his enemy, and extorted it unreasonably and violently from him: nor if I had known him to have been a notorious sinner, durst I ever give the more faith to this story."

‡ Rymer, iii. part i. 72.

§ 3º Edw. I. Stat. West. pri. cap. 34.

hardy as to tell or publish any false news or tales, whereby discord, or occasion of discord or slander, might grow between the king and his people, or the great men of the realm;" any one so offending was to be seized and kept in prison * till he should produce the first author of the tale. The punishment to be inflicted upon the first author is not expressed, either in the original statute, or in the order which required it to be vigilantly enforced; but there is a law of Alfred's †, by which the man who spreads a public falsehood was to have his tongue cut out; nor might that mutilation be commuted for any less price than he must have paid for his life. No king since the conquest had been so popular as Edward III.; yet so sensible was he how greatly his strength might be affected at this time by public opinion, that he addressed letters to the provincial and other heads of the Dominicans (or preaching friars) in England, exhorting them, for the double purpose of silencing obloquious tongues ‡, and informing the understandings of his faithful subjects, as well as strengthening their hearts, to explain themselves and the brethren who were under their authority, both in their sermons, and in public and private discourse, the cause, and the justice, and the necessity of the war in which he was engaged. He spoke of the heavy expenses which were brought upon him by the false dealing of Philip, who made use of treaties only as a cover for hostile machinations and movements, and who, assailing him and his subjects by land and by sea, threatened and conspired the subversion of the English tongue §; and who was then preparing a very great

* Before the king sailed, part of his instruction to the lord mayor and the sheriff was, "to look after the spreaders of false news in and about the city, and to apprehend all such persons, and lay them up in the prison of Newgate." — *Barnes*, 339.

† Canciani, iv. 252. "No legal apology," says Mr. Hallam, "can be made for a proclamation in April, 1549, addressed to all justices of the peace, enjoining them to arrest sowers and tellers abroad of vain and forged tales and lies, and to commit them to the galleys, there to row in chains as slaves during the king's pleasure." — *Constitutional Hist. of England*, i. 40.

‡ "Ad obstruendum ora de nobis obloquentium."

§ "In subversionem linguæ Anglicanæ cominans pro viribus et conspirans."

fleet of ships and mighty armies of men, with which at once to attack Gascony, Bretagne, and England, and to invade him from the south of Scotland: therefore, he said, he deemed it better with a strong hand to go seek the enemy in their own country, than wait ignobly at home for the threatened danger. He asked also for the prayers of the devout, saying it was not in earthly power that he put his trust, but in the hope of Divine protection, committing his cause to the Supreme Judge, whom he besought to deliver him from an unjust and deceitful enemy, and to alleviate the heavy burthens which were brought upon his subjects by reason of the war, and which grieved him more than he could express.*

Orders had already been given for arming the population in Kent, and especially in the Isle of Thanet, and arraying them in bodies of 20, 100, and 1000 men, to be at all times on the alert for the defence of the coast, which the enemy were menacing in great force.† They were now instructed to have beacons ‡ ready for giving the alarm without the least delay, and this not in Kent alone, but over the whole coast of England. Southampton was specially threatened as a place to which the invaders knew the way, and where they thought the very rumour of a new invasion would strike terror. The old injunctions §, therefore, for its defence were renewed; and the inhabitants of the maritime counties, who dwelt within six leagues from the coast, were exempted from any other military service or impost, than such as were required for local defence. The alarm was less on account of the French or Scotch, than of the Genoese and Spanish seamen ||, both these being alike remarkable for their skill and daring courage; and as their object was to destroy the English shipping as well as to ravage the coast, circular instructions were

* Rymer, iii. part i. 72.
† Ibid. 53.
‡ Ibid. 72.
§ Ibid. 78.
|| "Cum magnâ multitudini armatorum de longinquis partibus venientes."

sent for manning the ships, and guarding the ports and the whole coast well.*

The naval armament which Edward had prepared, consisted of about 700 sail †; but only fifty of these were large vessels, half of which were king's ships and half London ships: 4000 men at arms were embarked, 10,000 archers, 12,000 footmen of Wales, and 6000 Irish. The most chivalrous names in English history are in the list of the knights and nobles who accompanied the expedition: there were very few foreigners, the king's "German friends having fallen off, together with the emperor; but the lord Godfrey of Harcourt, a valiant baron ‡ of Normandy was there, at this time, inflaming the king's mind against his native country upon all occasions." Before Edward embarked, he addressed his captain and officers, and his speech was communicated to the whole army. He briefly stated that he had more right than Philip of Valois to the crown of France; and said, that as soon as he arrived in that country, it was his determination to send back his navy. Therefore it behoved them to be valiant, and either win the land with their swords, or resolve to perish there, for they could have no place to fly to;

* Rymer, iii. part i. 87.

† The accounts vary from 200 to 1600. I follow Mr Bree's statement, who had collected materials for a minute history of this expedition. Ships of forstage, he says, these large ships are called in one manuscript. The number of mariners in the king's ships was 419, averaging not quite 17 to each; in the London ones the average was about 26. The whole number of seamen he states at 14,451; the whole of the military at 26,604. There was one ship from Ireland with 184 mariners, which from that number one would imagine must have been the largest in the whole armament. — *Cursory Sketch*, 110—112.

‡ "He had fallen," says Froissart, "in the indignation of the French king; and it was said, all was but for envy: for a little before he was as great with the king, and with the duke of Normandy, as he would desire; but he was as then openly banished the realm of France, and if the king could have got him in his ire he would have served him as he did sir Oliver of Clisson, who was beheaded the year before at Paris. This sir Godfrey had some friends, who gave him warning secretly; then he avoided the realm as soon as he might, and went into Brabant to the duke there, who was his cousin, and there he tarried a long space, and lived of such revenues as he had in Brabant, for out of France he could get nothing; the king had seized all his lands there, and took the profit thereof himself. The duke of Brabant could in no wise get this knight again into the king's favour, for nothing that he could do. This displeasure cost greatly the realm of France after, especially the country of Normandy, for the tokens thereof remained a hundred years after." cap. 114.

but if any one was in doubt or fear to pass the sea with him, now that his purpose was declared, he might freely say so, and have his good leave to stay at home. To this sort of appeal there can be but one reply; and he was accordingly answered, as with one voice, that they would follow him as their good and dear lord, with a good will, even to death.*

Then the king delivered his sealed letters to the admirals of the fleet, commanding them not to open them, unless they should be separated by stress of weather. It was now the end of June; and they sailed from Southampton, making down the Channel, as if their course was designed for Bayonne or Bourdeaux, to relieve Aiguillon, then closely besieged, and most heroically defended. On the third day there arose a contrary wind, when they were far on their way, and drove the whole fleet back upon the coast of Cornwall, but without injury. Six days they lay at anchor there, waiting till the wind should become favourable: they then set forward again; but a like wind, in the same manner, drove them back again to the same place, without any damage, as before; which chance happening thus twice together, and the wind still continuing against them, the lord Godfrey of Harcourt took hold of that occasion to divert the king from Gascony to Normandy, a province which had not been the scene of war for two whole ages. "Sir," said he, "the country of Normandy is one of the plentiful countries of the world, and if ye will make thither, on jeopardy of my head, there is none that shall resist you. The people of Normandy have not been used to war; and all the lords, knights, and esquires of the country, are now with the duke at the siege before Aiguillon. And here, sir, you shall meet with great towns that are not walled, whereby your men shall have such winning, that they shall be the better for it twenty years hence; and thus you may proceed, without any hinderance, till you come to the great city of Caen. I beseech you, sir, put some

* Barnes, 339.

confidence in me in this matter, for I know that country well." Edward, who looked on Harcourt as his friend, and called him cousin, and whose plans were not so maturely fixed but that he was ready to follow whithersoever opportunity might seem to invite him, readily inclined to this council, bade the pilots steer for Normandy, and, taking into his own ship the earl of Warwick's standard (who was chief admiral), said that he himself would be admiral in that expedition, and so set forward as governor of the fleet.*

"And now," says Barnes, "as if Heaven consented to all this, he had wind at will." Seldom, indeed, if ever, have such momentous consequences ensued from a seemingly fortuitous change of purpose. On the 11th of July, the whole fleet arrived safely at the road of La Hogue St. Vast, within a few leagues of St. Sauveur la Vicomté, lord Godfrey de Harcourt's right heritage, of which he had been unjustly deprived. Edward, to show how eagerly his heart was set upon the undertaking, would be the first to land, and leaping hastily on shore, "the first foot that he set on the ground he fell so rudely that the blood burst out of his nose. The knights that were about him raised him up, and said, 'Sir, for God's sake enter again into your ship, and come not on land this day, for this is but an evil sign for us!'..'Nay,' said the king, 'this is a good token, for it shows that the land desireth to have me.'"† A more pensive observer of tokens, .. and there is no superstition to which we are more prone, .. might have interpreted it far otherwise, and said that the land was athirst for blood;.. the next hundred years wofully verified such an interpretation!

Edward's determination of carrying the war into the enemy's country, instead of waiting for it on his own shores, was as politic as it was magnanimous. The French king had formed a like intention; he had built

* Froissart, Chron. 121. Barnes, 339—341.

† Froissart, Chron. 122. Barnes, 344. Old Joshua says here, with a quaint pedantry unusual in him, "that, by a sudden *antispasis*, or contrary attraction, the blood gushed out of his nose."

ships, (one at Harfleur is said to have been of incredible magnitude,) and he was daily expecting a powerful squadron from Genoa. But such preparations were too tardy: the sins of England were not now to be punished by a foreign enemy, nor was the visitation that impended over France to be averted by the policy of which Philip had formerly availed himself. The king of England was no longer at the head of a force, that consisted chiefly of subsidised troops, and allies on whose stability little confidence could be placed, but with the flower of his own chivalry, and the strength of his own people, .. English archers, and English hearts and hands, men who were of one language, and of one mind and mould, on whose conduct and courage he could rely in any extremity of danger. It is not consistent with the design of this work to pursue the destructive course of his army through Normandy, nor the ravages which it committed within sight of Paris, nor the battle of Cressy . . that famous victory, one of the most signal that has ever been achieved, and one of those which have left the deepest and most enduring remembrance in the feelings of two great nations. From the time of his landing in Normandy*, Edward had determined upon laying siege to Calais, because it was the "most convenient landing-place for any out of England to set footing in France;" and also, because it had "done many great displeasures to him and his people, by its piracies exercised on the English seas." Calais was at that time "a place of incredible strength, as well for its advantageous situation, as for those wonderful accessions of art which made it almost impregnable by any human power." Edward, however, knew that what could not be won by force might be subdued by famine, and that after such a defeat as France had suffered, no effort that she could make would be in time for relieving the town.

On the last day of August he pitched his camp before Calais, "that strong town which had been of old so great a nuisance to him and his kingdom." He invested

* Barnes, 343.

it at the same time by sea and by land, the fleet arriving from England at this juncture, under the lord high admiral, William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, and the lord John Montgomery, vice-admiral. The maritime force which was kept up during the continuance of the siege might well be called a "mighty navy," though but a small part of it could at any time have been employed in blockading the harbour and watching the coast; for from authentic documents, the number of vessels is known to have been 738, and the mariners 14,956.* Philip, who could undertake nothing for its relief by land, made great efforts to throw in supplies by sea. To prevent this, Edward erected strong works between the town and the sea†: they were guarded by archers and slingers, who watched the victual-boats night and day; "for the people of Boulogne used in little boats and bylanders to steal along the shore by night, or in misty weather." Once the admiral

* Hakluyt has printed the roll of the huge fleet of Edward III. before Calais, extant in the king's great wardrobe in London, whereby the wonderful strength of England by sea in those days may appear. The south fleet consisted of 493 sail, and 9630 men; the north of 217 sail, 4521 men. There were 38 foreign ships, in which one from Ireland was included; the others were, 15 from Bayonne, 7 from Spain, 14 from Flanders, and 1 from Gelderland: the numbers on board these foreigners amounted to 805. "The sum of expences, as well of wages and prests, as for the expenses of the king's houses, and for other gifts and rewards, ships, and other things necessary to the parties of France and Normandy, and before Calais, during the siege there, as it appeareth in the accounts of William Norwel, keeper of the king's wardrobe, from the 21st day of April, in the eighteenth year of the reign of the said king, unto the 24th day of November, in the one-and-twentieth year of his reign, is 337,951*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*"—*Hakluyt*, lib. 118—121.

† "A strong castle and a high, to close up the passage by the sea;" (lord Berners has not specified in his translation that it was constructed wholly of wood:—*fit charpenter un chastel de longs mes-riens*;) "and this castle was well fortified with springalles, bombardes, bowes, and other artillery; and in this castle were threescore men of arms, and two hundred archers: they kept the haven in such wise, that nothing could come in nor out."—*Froissart*, cap. 144. "Then the king made all his navy to draw along by the coast of the Downs, every ship well garnished with bombards, cross-bowers, archers, springalles, and other artillery, whereby the French host might not pass that way."—Ibid. 145. If this authority were sufficient, it would show that cannon were used not only in the works, but on board the English ships. It is remarkable that there should be any doubt concerning this, and that the first introduction of such deadly instruments should not be distinctly specified by the writers of that age. Froissart's use of the word bombard is not sufficient proof. Joshua Barnes (362) is of opinion that they were not used; though, he says, that in a record of the fourteenth year of Edward III., six years before the battle of Cressy, mention is made of thirty-two tons of powder. The question is, what that powder was?

of France came up, making a demonstration as if he would engage the English fleet, with a view that a flotilla of small boats meantime might get into the town; but the earl of Northampton put him to flight with great loss, and most of the boats were taken. The siege had continued more than six weeks, when a little after Easter, early one morning, thirty Norman ships and galleys eluded the vigilance of the English fleet, victualled the town, and effected their retreat with little or no hurt. "From that time the king caused the mouth of the haven to be quite blocked up, and the earl of Warwick, with eighty tall ships, scoured the channel between Calais and Dover." That admiral got sight of twelve Genoese galleys, convoying seventy sail of stout ships, all laden with provisions and stores for the garrison; the Genoese fled upon his approach, and the whole convoy was taken. The French, and the Genoese in their service, were not, however, idle; at several times during the siege, they destroyed or captured fifteen of Edward's best ships of war. But most of the little relief that reached the besieged was introduced by two gallant seamen, Marant and Meatreil by name, inhabitants of Abbeville. These brave and enterprising men "often comforted and refreshed the Caliscans, by bringing in to them a-nights provision in light boats, whereby they exposed themselves to much danger, being often chaced; but they always escaped: and not only so, but in dark nights they would come silently in their small boats to the skirts of the fleet, and bore holes through their big vessels something below the surface of the water, whereby not a few men were drowned, the ships being full of water, before they could find a leak."* The last hope of the garrison failed when the earl of Oxford and the lord Walter Manny, on their way with reinforcements from England, intercepted a French fleet, and carried in as prizes the ships which were bound for their relief.†

A.D. 1347.

So much gallantry, and perseverance, and generosity

* Barnes, 399. Froissart, chap. 140. † Barnes, 403.

were displayed on both sides at the siege of Calais, that the historians of either country may relate the details with a just feeling of national pride. When Edward had secured his conquest, and a truce of a few weeks had been made, he embarked for his own country, with the queen and the Black Prince, and, as usual, in his homeward voyage, encountered dreadful weather, by which many vessels with all on board were lost. "St. Mary, my blessed Lady," he is reported to have exclaimed, "what should be the meaning of this, that always in my passage for France, the winds and seas befriend me, but on my return to England, I meet with nothing but storms and tempests?" It was probably during the danger of this passage that he made a vow of building a monastery to the honour of God and our Lady of Grace, if they would graciously bring him safe to land: in pursuance of which vow, he founded the Cistertian abbey of St. Mary of Grace, (which was called also Eastminster and New Abbey,) near East Smithfield.*

The truce was pieced up from time to time, and spun on by divers prorogations, though in Gascony it was little regarded, and in Bretagne still less, on either part. "Now," says Barnes, "doth king Edward III. seem to stand in the full zenith of his glories,.. crowned at home in his family, with a lovely row of hopeful children, and a virtuous and beautiful consort; in his kingdoms, with peace and full prosperity; and abroad he was renowned above all the kings of the earth, for his victories by sea and by land, in Scotland, France, and Bretagne; for set battles, or taking of towns; for kings slain, kings routed, and kings taken captive. Nor was his moderation less admired and commended which he showed in refusing the title and dignity of an emperor. Now, by means of so honourable a peace, (a truce prolonged through several years was felt as such by the people,) founded on so many remarkable victories, it seemed as if the golden age was reduced to England, and a new

* Barnes, 413. 437.

sun begun to shine in our horizon; so great riches and plenty, the usual attendants of conquest, being generally diffused over the face of the whole land.* For there were few women that were housekeepers within this land, but they had some furniture of household that had been brought to them out of France, as part of the spoil: scarce a lady or gentlewoman of any account which had not in her possession some precious household stuff, as rich gowns, beds, counterpanes, hangings, linen, silks, furs, cups of gold and silver, porcelain and crystal, bracelets, chains and necklaces, brought from Caen, Calais, or other cities beyond sea. And yet as the Roman historians complain that they were overcome by the luxury and fashions of the nations they had conquered, so from this time the native candour and simplicity of the English nation did visibly impair, and pride, superfluity, and vanity, began to lift up their hateful heads, till they provoked the Author of the world to visit their land also with his awakening judgments."

The previous history of England will not justify us in imputing any such "native candour and simplicity," to our ancestors, as the honest and simple-hearted historian of Edward III. has here ascribed to them. But the history of other countries, as well as of our own, may teach us that, upon any great and rapid influx or creation of wealth, a great change ensues in the manners of the people, and that that change is inevitably accompanied with great evil. Men's minds receive an impulse which is too powerful to be salutary, and which more easily, because it may be feared more naturally, takes the di-

* When Caen was taken, where the English "tarried three days gathering the spoil, because they made resistance, and were taken by force, there were found, as one reckons, among other riches of gold and silver and the like, no less than 40,000 pieces of fine cloth, silks, and linen, beside other wares proportionable; all which the king sent down the river Orne to Estrehan, where the navy lay, to be carried to St. Sauveur le Vicomte; from whence, soon after, by the king's command, the earl of Huntingdon conveyed all into England, as well cloth and other stuff for garments, vessels of gold and silver, jewels, and other riches, as all the prisoners, whereof in this bout at Caen there were no less than 86 great lords, barons, and knights, and above 300 rich citizens." — *Barnes*, 346.

† Barnes, 416. Holinshed, i. 649.

rection of evil than of good. The regular course of quiet and contented industry is unsettled; habits of wasteful and emulous expenditure are introduced; and means for these, when extraordinary supplies begin to fail, must be supplied by exactions from the inferior classes; so that while the rich become richer and more powerful, the condition of the poor is rendered, not relatively alone, but actually worse. The wealth brought from the East Indies, when the Europeans first established themselves on the Malabar coast, produced this effect in Portugal; the spoils of the west produced it in Spain; and the growth of our manufacturing system has made us feel it wofully in these times. But the immediate operation of any such rapid prosperity upon the morals of a nation is worse, when, as in Edward's age, it is the direct result of war, the open and undisguised meed of rapine and violence. That king entered into his contest with France at first from motives of personal ambition, for the recovery of what he deemed his hereditary right, and he pursued the war upon views of sound policy, considering the circumstances in which he was placed; but it was rendered popular as soon as it became successful, by the temptations which it held out to the bold and the rapacious: and it was unquestionably considered by the great body of those who were engaged in it, a predatory war. And as wealth acquired by such means never brought with it a blessing to the possessor, so wars conducted in that spirit have ever, in the righteous course of retribution, drawn after them their punishment.

A.D. 1348.

During the truce, a pestilence the most terrible that has ever yet been recorded, beginning in the farthest east, and taking its course through the Levant, and Italy, and Germany, visited France and England. Here it first appeared about the beginning of August, in the sea-ports of Dorset, Devon, and Somersetshire, from whence it reached Bristol. The Gloucestershire men forbade all intercourse with the Bristolians: "but this familiar fury, says the historian, wanted no medium to introduce it;

for as the Scripture saith of the pestilence, that it walketh in darkness, or invisibly, its progress not being to be found out, so, unexpectedly and contrary to human precaution, this plague walked, or rather flew, among the Gloucestershire men, whence it went to Oxford, and about the first of November it reached London; finally, it spread itself all over England, scattering every where such ruin and desolation, that of all sorts hardly the tenth person was left alive." More than 50,000 persons were cut off by it in one year in London, and a greater number in half that time at Norwich. The courts of justice were closed in consideration of this grievous mortality, and the session of parliament suspended for more than two years. The pope, meantime, ceased not to exhort, by his letters, both the kings of England and France to a final agreement, "that they might so avoid the severe stroke of God's vengeance, assuring them that all these things happened as a punishment for the sins of mankind. Having," said he, "our confidence in Him, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, we resolve by no means to desist from the prosecution of the treaty already begun; but intend by so much the more effectually and carefully to promote it, by how much the more the miserable state of the world requires it at a time, when He, who is a jealous God, and the Lord of vengeance, being provoked with the multitude of sins, which charity doth not cover, but wrath increases, is consuming it in His anger, by the general ravages of an unheard-of pestilence." He urged them, therefore, earnestly to come to an agreement, lest, "which," said he, "God forbid, that small flock which the Saviour of the world, who woundeth and healeth, hath preserved like seed-corn from this destruction, should now be drowned in the waves of commotion, and swallowed up in the miserable tempest of war."*

The result of this mediation was, that Edward was, by these pious exhortations, so far prevailed on as to

* Barnes, 437.

send commissioners to treat with those of the French king. The persons appointed were the bishop of Norwich, the earls of Lancaster, Suffolk, and Northampton, and the lords Walter Manny, Robert Bouchier, Ralph Stafford, and Richard Talbot. The conference was held between Calais and St. Omer's, the bishop of Lyons, the abbot of St. Dennis, and two cardinals being present on the pope's behalf to moderate between the two parties. The French insisted that Calais should be restored; finding that England would on no terms consent to this, they then proposed that it should be rased to the ground, and this also was as peremptorily refused. At length, by the urgent intercession of the moderators, it was agreed, that if a final peace (for which conferences were to be held) could not be concluded by the September following, the crown of France should, by consent of both parties, be brought to a certain convenient place within that realm, and the right thereto, without any other trial or appeal, be there decided by a pitched battle.* Such a resolution is so consonant to the spirit of those times, that we may be assured it was proposed and accepted in good faith; but had it come to this, there would have been no superior authority, as in case of the ordinary wager by battle, to have enforced acquiescence in the result; and certain it is, that the losing party would have acquiesced no longer than till it found itself strong enough to provoke another trial. But before the month of September, king Philip died; and by repeated negotiations with his successor, king Jean, the truce was from time to time prolonged. If Edward could have obtained a secure peace for his hereditary possessions on the continent, and for Calais, the possession of which was deemed necessary for his sovereignty of the seas, it seems that he would have been contented to waive his claims to the crown of France. The heat of his ambition had past away with youth; and, indeed, nothing could add to the glory which he had attained,

* Barnes, 437.

Knights, not from France only and the nearer parts of Europe, but from distant Armenia, came to decide their differences by single combat in his presence. There was a splendour attached to his name, and his court, and his round table, and his order of the garter, exceeding that of any other Christian prince since Charlemagne; and Windsor became in the romances of the next generation what the courts of Arthur and of Charlemagne had been in the preceding age, and in other cycles of romance.

The truce afforded little security for the seas, or the sea-coast. Don Luis de España, who died * during the siege of Calais, had been succeeded by his son don Carlos de la Cerda, a man as brave and as enterprising as himself, and who seems to have inherited his bitter cruelty towards the English. The constable of France having been made prisoner at Cressy, he was appointed to hold the office, and he was also made count of Angoulême; but at this time he was in command of a Spanish fleet, and finding a ready pretext in some of those disputes which were continually arising between the subjects of maritime nations, he "beset the British sea with a force of forty-four tall men of war." Encountering with ten English merchant ships, laden with wine from Gascony, they boarded, won, rifled, and sunk them; and many more evils they did about the coasts of Aquitaine and England, as firing ships which they found at anchor, robbing and killing our merchants, and what other Englishmen fell into their hands. At length they entered the harbour of Sluys. The mischief they had done was very great †, and much more they threatened; for, collecting a great armament in the Flemish ports, they talked, like their successors in

* Barnes, 405. Salazar (Hist. de La Casa de Lara, tom. i. 192.) is mistaken in saying that he fell gloriously at the battle of Cressy.

† "Gentes nostras, mercatores videlicet, et alios per mare cum vinis, lanis et aliis mercimoniis et bonis suis navigantes, quampluries hostiliter invaserunt, et bonis suis hujusmodi deprædârunt ac immaniter trucidêrunt et interfecerunt, *partemque non modicam navigii destruxerunt*, et alia mala innumera perpetrârunt, et indies perpetrare non desistunt." — *Rymer*, iii. part i. 201.

the armada, of nothing less than the invasion and conquest of England.* Edward had the more reason to complain of this, because he had sought to confirm the old relations of amity and consanguinity which had existed between the royal families of Castille and England; and his daughter Joan, having been espoused by proxy to the prince D. Pedro, had died in Spain, on her way to join him, of the pestilence, so that the prince who came to meet her and solemnise the espousals †, followed her corpse to its funeral; . . a happy deliverance for her, and the first tragic circumstance in the tragical history of Pedro the Cruel. Two years had not elapsed since her death, and Pedro, during that interval, had succeeded to the throne. Well, therefore, might Edward feel the more aggrieved, by hostilities which he felt on his part to have been wholly unprovoked, and which were carried on in a spirit as insolent as it was cruel.

He made preparations, therefore, not only for the defence of the sea-coast, but for going, in person, to seek the enemy and give them battle on the seas. This determination was announced to the two archbishops, and they were enjoined, with processions, prayers, masses, offerings, and other solemnities, by which they deemed the Lord might be propitiated, to call upon Him who is the giver of all victory, and who had of late so signally extended the right hand of his protection over the English army. A fleet of fifty ships and pinnaces was collected, and Edward embarked at Sandwich, with the Black Prince, then in the twentieth year of his age, the earls of Lancaster, Northampton, Warwick, Salisbury, Arundel, Huntingdon, Gloucester, and other lords and knights, with their several retinues, and a good number of stout archers, on whom the English at this time placed as much reliance in naval warfare as in the field. On the 29th of August, about the hour of

* "Jamque in tantam erecti sunt superbim quòd immensâ classe in partibus Flandriæ, per ipsos congregatâ, et gentibus armatis vallatâ, necnon se navigium nostrum in totum velle destruere, et mari Anglicano dominari jactare præsumunt sed regnum nostrum invadere, populumque nobis subjectum, extermineo subdere velle expressè comminantur." — *Rymer*, iii. part i. 202.

† Barnes, 438.

A.D. 1350. matins, he fell in with them off the coasts of Rye and Winchelsea. There is no mention of galleys on either side in the action that ensued; though Edward had two years before obtained twelve from Genoa, equipped and manned there*, and had appointed Amerigo de Pavia to the command of all his galleys, and of all on board, arbalisters as well as seamen.† The Spaniards seem to have discovered that such vessels were not well adapted for the British seas, and to have relied, as they did two centuries later, on the superior strength and magnitude of their ships. There began a fierce engagement between the two fleets, the Spanish huge carracks easily overlooking the English vessels, and almost overwhelming them with a storm of cross-bow shot, stones, timbers, and bars of iron, that flew incessantly from their high built castles. But the archers of England pierced their arbalisters with a farther reach than they could strike again, . . one of the advantages of the arrow over the quarrel ‡ being, that it went much further, and with a surer aim. Our bowmen thus compelled them to appear more rarely on the decks, obliging those, also, who fought on the hatches, to cover themselves with planks and tables, and fetching down with their "winged messengers" such as threw stones from the tops of their ships. "And then," continues the historian of this martial reign, "after a long and doubtful fight, the English men of arms began to board the Spanish vessels with swords, lances, halberds, and battle-axes in their hands, cruelly slaying and tumbling overboard all they met with, to make room for new guests which king Edward had brought with him for that purpose." When evening closed, seventeen § of the enemies' ships had been taken, "when, all out of season," says old Joshua, who would have stopt the sun and moon that day if he might, "envious night came on to befriend

* Rymer, iii. part i. 117. † Ibid. 159.

‡ Only, indeed, when the wind blew strong the cross-bow would be the more serviceable arm.

§ This is the lowest statement; some accounts say twenty-two, others twenty-six.

the Spaniards, but to deprive the English of an absolute and entire victory. For hereby they were fain to cast anchor, and to desist from pursuing their good beginnings, being forced to abandon a further trial till the next day. And, therefore, as supposing nothing done to purpose, while any thing remained undone they fell to dressing their own wounded, but flung the miserable Spaniards into that sea whereon they had so lately trespassed." * This was no doubt considered as an act of due though dreadful retaliation.

"Then having taken their repast, and set the watch, they waited for the morning; but being freshly apparelled for fight, when day came, they looked about all over the seas, but saw no sign of any thing to resist them, for Don Carlos had escaped with the remainder of his fleet under cover of the darkness." The English lost no ship in this great victory, but it was not obtained without great loss of lives. The king, we are told, thought it too dearly purchased with that of sir John Goldesborough, "a young knight of great valour, of comely shape and noble deportment," who was much lamented by Edward and by the Black Prince, "to whom he was always very dear, upon the account of his extraordinary qualities, and almost equal age, and conformity of will and inclination." No fewer than fourscore youths, who had distinguished themselves in this action, were rewarded with the honour of knighthood. The fleet then returned; and it was not long before commissioners were sent to Flanders to treat for an accommodation with the Spaniards at Sluys, and in other parts of that country, as if it were with them and not with the Spanish government that the war had arisen, and was to be terminated.† Hostilities seem to have ceased herewith; and next year a peace was made between the two crowns for twenty years.‡

Meanwhile, though the truce with France was not ended, "each party took the liberty, as they saw ad- A.D. 1351.

* Barnes, 451, 452. † Rymer, iii. part i. 210.
‡ Barnes, 459.

vantage, to enterprise somewhat upon the other." In one enterprise from Calais, the king's cousin, Henry duke of Lancaster, (the first Englishman who bore the title of duke, the Black Prince, as duke of Cornwall, excepted,) burnt the suburbs of Boulogne to the very walls; and, failing in an attempt upon the town itself, by reason that his scaling ladders were too short, fired all the vessels in the haven: he did the same at Estaples, and upon his circuit back burnt above 100 vessels in the inland ports.* The differences which gave occasion to these inroads were soon adjusted, and a farther truce agreed on, with this honest condition, that either King might renounce it whenever he pleased. During this kind of insecure peace those who infested the seas were considered as pirates, and seem indeed to have had no pretension to any better appellation. A squadron of seven men of war, with certain pinnaces to attend them, was fitted out under sir Thomas Cook and sir Richard Tottlesham to scour the coasts of Picardy and Normandy; and this service was successfully performed.† But though at this time the reputation which Edward had obtained by his naval victories was such that he was called king of the sea ‡, and his naval force was at this time greater than at any earlier or later part of his reign, the country was not secure from the threat of invasion nor from the fear of it. The enemy made preparations for invading the Isle of Wight, with the intention of fortifying themselves there; and, probably, in hope of compelling the English to give up Calais in exchange for it: all the inhabitants capable of bearing arms were therefore arrayed, and beacons made ready, and orders given that no provisions should be exported from the island. § The alarm extended beyond those

A. D. 1352.

* Barnes, 450. † Ibid. 464.

‡ "La navie du dit roiaulme estoit en toutz portz è bonnes villes sur meer et sur rivière si noble et si plenteouse, que tous les pais tenoient et appelloient notre avaunt-dit seigneur le roi de la meer, et lui et tout son pais dotoient le pluis par mer et par terre, per cause de la dite navie." — *Rot. Parl.* 46 Edw. III. *Bree's Cursory Sketch*, 176.

§ Rymer, iii. part i. 238 239.

places which were immediately on the coast; and so many of the inhabitants of Winchester removed from that city, alleging, as their motive, not the fear of danger, but the pressure of those charges to which they were liable for local and maritime defence, that the city was left in a state of insecurity by this desertion; and all such persons were ordered to return thither, on pain of having their goods distrained.*

Unhappily for France these protracted truces, and the irritation produced on both sides by mutual infractions, ended in open war, in another invasion of that kingdom, not by Edward himself, but by his son, the most heroic name in English history, .. Edward the Black Prince; and in another victory, more glorious in its circumstances, if that were possible, to English valour, than the battle of Cressy, and more disastrous in its results to France. The three estates, who took upon themselves the government after the capture of the king, prepared two great fleets, in the hope of rescuing him on his passage to England. He was "in a good ship, by himself, lest he should conceive any offence or molestation;" this being conformable to that highly honourable respect with which he had been treated from the time of the battle; but 200 men-at-arms and 2000 archers kept close beside him; and the Black Prince, who was in the fleet, sailed with such a force, that, though they were eleven days on the passage from Gascony to Sandwich, no attempt was made to intercept them.†

A.D. 1356.

1357.

This victory led to no peace, though the pope, with a view of embarrassing Edward, and thereby compelling him to close upon any terms his dispute with France, demanded of him the arrears of the tribute which king John had promised, and which had not been paid since his time, 140 years having elapsed. "But he, who, besides his own courageous heart, had both a more loving clergy and loyal baronage than had that unfortunate king John, answered, wisely and roundly, that he would never

* Rymer, iii. part i. 238.

† Barnes, 526.

pay tribute to any mortal whatsoever, because he held his kingdom, and would continue to hold it, freely, and without subjection to any one, but only to Almighty God."* A truce, however, was made till Midsummer, 1359, and one for ten years with Scotland, by which David, the king of Scotland, obtained his liberty; and at the expiration of which term "the Scotch might be free to choose peace or war, as they should like best." Till now, whatever truce had been proclaimed between the two nations, it had never been entirely observed, but had been continually interrupted, "either by the robberies of the borderers on land, or the piracies of private men by sea." These hostilities were chiefly on the part of the Scotch, who had most to gain by them, and were properly considered as the acts of moss-troopers and pirates, not as national offences. Just at the time when the two kings were concluding this ten years' truce, with a sincere desire of peace, three Scotch pirates, in vessels of such force, that they had with them no less than 300 chosen men-of-arms, infested the coasts, and committed great depredations upon the English merchant ships; but about the autumnal equinox "there arose a high and strong wind, which drove them and many English vessels also, as well of war as others, altogether into Yarmouth haven, where it pleased God the Scots were taken every man, and brought to a just account for all their piracies."† If English ships of war had not been driven thither by the same stress of weather, they might have remained there in defiance of any local force.

A.D. 1359. The captive King of France had agreed upon terms of peace, and signed and sealed the agreement; but the three estates and the dauphin refused their consent, and Edward prepared once more for invading that unfortunate country. While the preparations were going on, he, and the Black Prince his son, visited most of the celebrated shrines in England, offering up prayers

* Barnes, 523. † Ibid. 529.

every where for a blessing upon their arms, or for an honourable and lasting peace. And one day when they were in Westminster Abbey, visiting the monuments of their predecessors and ancestors, the king chose a place for his own burial, hard by the shrine of Edward the Confessor, charging the prince and his other children, upon his blessing, that when it should please God to call him out of this transitory life to a better, they should lay his body there.* It is worthy of notice, that portable mills, which Pompeo Targona, one of Spinola's engineers, is said to have invented, or some German a little later, and which were introduced into the French army in the peninsular war by Marshal Marmont, made part of the camp equipment of Edward and the English chiefs at this time.† They had also leathern boats, which being light of carriage were easily transported, and were capable each of carrying three men.‡

While Edward was in the heart of France, at the head of a most formidable army, the French had fitted out a fleet of 120 sail under the count of St. Pol, who, landing at Rye and at Hastings, "spoiled the towns, slew the people, and did much harm to the poor fishers." They made a descent also at Winchelsea on St. Mathias's day, where, even in the church, they killed all whom they found, without regard to age or sex, except such women as they reserved for worse than death. But there they tarried so long that the country was roused; some 400 of them were slain before they could reach their ships; and naval aid also arrived in time to capture thirteen of their vessels, but not to rescue the women whom these wretches had reserved

A.D. 1360.

* Barnes, 564. † Ibid. 577. Froissart, Chron. 210.

‡ "To fish in them at their pleasure, the which did the great lords much pleasure in the Lent season." It should seem, from Froissart's account, that they were intended for this rather than any military use. The army, indeed, seems to have been abundantly supplied, though Froissart must have followed a most exaggerated report, when he says, that they had with them 6000 carts, and for every cart "at least four good horses brought out of England." They had ovens as well as camp kitchens and forges. "Also the king had thirty falconers on horseback, with hawks, and seventy couple of hounds, and as many greyhounds, so that near every day either he hunted or hawked at the river, as pleased him; and divers of the great lords had hounds and hawks as well as the king." Chap. 210. Holinshed, ii. 673.

alive. The horrors which had been perpetrated excited great alarm throughout England, and yet greater indignation. Orders were given that along the whole coast, and even as far inland as Bristol, all ships should be drawn ashore, far enough to be deemed perfectly secure, but not, however, to be dismantled but kept ready for service.* Great exertions were made. A decree came forth for arraying all men between the ages of sixteen and sixty, of whom "the lustiest and best armed, and the tall archers, were to be sent to the king's admirals at the Cinque-ports, for the defence of the kingdom. Spiritual indulgences were granted to all who went to sea against the enemy, and particularly this, that every one might choose his confessor at his pleasure." The bishops also, themselves, the abbots and priors, rectors, vicars, chaplains, and all clergy whatsoever, were ready on the land to defend the country, some as men-of-arms, and others as archers, by injunction of the church; and every beneficed person who could not himself serve was bound to maintain a substitute: for the loss of population in the pestilence was at this time so recent, that every hand was wanting for the defence of the country. The city of London, with a spirit worthy of that martial age, fitted out a fleet of eighty sail to revenge upon the coasts of France, . . though not, it is to be hoped, in the same way, . . the outrages which had been committed at Winchelsea. This expedition scoured the seas from Boulogne to Harfleur, and wasted all that part of Normandy lying between the Seine and the Bresle.†

The French were now too wary to engage with king Edward in the field, though he marched to Paris, and, drawing up his army before that city, sent heralds to the regent, Charles duke of Normandy, demanding battle, and pledging himself, if he should lose the day, never more to assume any right or title to the crown of France. That prince not only refused the challenge, but forbade any man, on pain of death, to issue out of

* Rymer, iii. part i. 471, 472.
† Fabyan, 473. Holinshed, ii. 673. Barnes, 576.

the barriers without his order: "so well," says Barnes*, "had he, who was afterwards surnamed the Wise, learned how to deal with this English Hannibal, not only by the example of the old Roman Fabius, but of his own father and grandfather, whose frequent and great losses, proceeding from their too forward courage, taught him now to oppose a shield to this conquering sword, and not put his last stake to the fortune of a battle." Edward had made a vow never to return to England till he should have brought France to his terms, either by fair means or by force. He had retired towards Bretagne, meaning to settle the affairs of that duchy and refresh his army there, and then, at the latter end of the summer, to return, and lay formal siege to the capital. Necessity, however, compelled the regent to offer terms when he had marched as far as Chartres; and Edward's kinsman, the duke of Lancaster, a man of the most approved courage and conduct, "with courteous words and sage persuasions," advised him not to repel the reasonable conditions which the French were now contented to agree to, seeing that, by the kind of war wherein he was now engaged, "his soldiers only gained, and he himself consumed his treasures; and, further, he might war in this sort all the days of his life before he could attain to his intent, and perhaps lose in one day more than he had gained in twenty years." This was the counsel of a brave and wise man; for none better understand the uncertainty of war than those who have had most experience in it, and are most capable of profiting by what they have seen. Such fair and subtle words, says Froissart, that the duke of Lancaster said in good intention, and for the welfare of the king and all his subjects, converted the king, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who was the chief worker in this case. For while the ambassadors were treating for this peace, and had no favourable answers, there suddenly came on such a tempest of thunder, lightning, rain, and hail, to

* Page 578.

which the army were exposed, that it seemed as if the world would have ended. "Many men and horses were killed by the hail, . . some accounts have said thousands. Certain it is, the hurt was so great, and the storm, in all its circumstances, so awful, that the haughtiest hearts quailed, and the bravest were stricken with religious fear. The king himself was smitten in conscience, and began, perhaps, for the first time, to apprehend that, however rightful he might deem his claims, a heavy responsibility might be incurred to his Creator and his Judge, for the means by which he had prosecuted it. Turning his face toward the cathedral church, which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, he made a vow that he would consent to the conditions of peace. While this devotional feeling was fresh, he eased his mind by a confession of his sins; and peace was forthwith concluded, with the sincere hope and intention on his part that it might be lasting." *

The king of France was then set at liberty, after four years' captivity, giving hostages for such part of his ransom as was not immediately paid, and among them his son the duke of Anjou. It is proof of no ordinary generosity in both these kings, that their intercourse, under circumstances so little likely to have produced such an effect, should have led to a true friendship. When they had finally sworn to the peace in the church of St. Nicolas at Calais, and the Pax was to be kissed, "by which ceremony was signified that the peace of Christ, whose image was before them, was from thenceforth to remain between them, . . the French king, to whom it was first presented, refused it, in courtesy, till Edward should have taken it; and the king of England declining it in the same spirit, both at the same time rose from their knees, and, . . with an impulse of sincerity more impressive to the beholders than any ceremony could have been, . . instead of the Pax, they kissed each other, with hearty demonstrations of a mutual friendship."

* Froissart, Chap. 211.

Oaths were taken by the two eldest sons of England and France, and the chief lords of both realms, that they would, to the utmost of their power, help to preserve the peace, and that the injuries on both sides should never more be borne in mind. In this disposition they parted. And Edward showed so much courtesy to the hostages, that he allowed them to go over to Calais, and from thence, "being near home," visit their friends, and hasten the payment of the ransom; requiring only that they should always return to that fortress on the fourth evening. The duke of Anjou abused this confidence; and, unknown to his companions, "took the opportunity to ride clear off, neither well considering his father's honour nor his own; whereat king Jean was infinitely displeased." *

A. D. 1362.

That king had determined upon making a crusade; and while preparations for it were going on, he informed his council that it was first his intention to cross the Channel and pay a visit to his brother of England and the queen his sister, .. for by those appellations he was wont always to call them after his release. "They of his council," says Froissart, "could not make him vary from that purpose, and yet they counselled him sore to the contrary, divers of his prelates and barons saying, that he took on him a great folly, so to put himself in the danger of the king of England." But he made answer, "Sirs, let me believe my own judgement! I have found in the king of England my brother, and in the queen and their children, so much truth and honour, that I cannot praise them too much; wherefore I doubt me nothing of them, but that they will be to me right courteous and true friends in all cases." He said also that he wished to confer with king Edward about the crusade, and also to excuse his son the duke of Anjou. This was, no doubt, the moving motive; for feeling his honour wounded, he wished to prove his own generosity by showing how entirely he confided in that of the English

* Froissart, Chron. 218. Holinshed, ii. 678. Barnes, 593. 602. 630.

A.D. 1364.

king. During this visit he was seized with a mortal illness, and died at the Savoy palace in London, greatly regretted by Edward and his family. The personal friendship between them had served to counteract that strong feeling of national animosity which the long course of hostilities had produced in both countries, and which became stronger as the differences between them became more marked; for at this time it was, that, after three centuries, the language of the English people finally prevailed over that of their Norman conquerors, it being ordained, at the suit of the commons, "that men of law should plead their causes and write their actions and plaints in the English tongue, and not in the French, as they had been accustomed to do ever since the Conquest; and that schoolmasters should teach their scholars to construe their lessons in English, and not in French." * At the same time that English was thus established by law, Chaucer, by the higher authority of genius, set upon it his sterling stamp, and breathed into English poetry a spirit, which, through all changes of time and taste, it has continued to preserve. Largely as our mixed speech has drawn from the French, not only in its vocabulary, but in its idiomatic forms, there are no two European languages that differ more essentially in character; and that difference, by its effects upon the literature of each, has materially contributed to produce the marked difference of character between the two nations.†

When the war was renewed, France had a powerful ma-

* Holinshed, ii. 678.

† In the month of June, 1367, Barnes (717.), on the authority of an old manuscript at Cambridge, says, "There appeared in the Northern Sea a great navy of Danes, who purposed to come into England, and over-run, rob, and slay, as their ancestors had done in the time of the Saxon kings. But they were encountered and met with at sea by a good fleet of English mariners, and other valiant men, who overthrew and scattered them, and made them return inglorious into their own country. But, among others, there was a mighty and strong ship called the Denmark, which, being over-sailed by the Englishmen, was taken and sunk; and in her was found the high steward and other great officers and lords of Denmark, who being brought into England, were, by word from the king and council, thrown into prison. Shortly after, there came certain Danish deputies to negotiate for the delivery of the foresaid lords of their country, with their goods; but receiving an answer no way pleasing unto them, they returned home again,

ritime ally in the king of Castille, Henrique II., who having been defeated by the Black Prince in the great battle of Najara, nearly on the same ground where, in our own days, the not less signal battle of Vittoria was gained by British valour, had afterwards recovered the throne, and secured himself in its possession by the death of his brother king Pedro. An embassy was going at this time from Edward to the duke of Bretagne; and as there was some likelihood of encountering the French and Spaniards at sea, a considerable fleet was sent with it, under the lord Guy Brian, "an experienced commander both by sea and land, and one of the most illustrious order of the garter:" with him was joined sir Richard Sturry, and many other valiant captains, with a choice number of archers. Prince Thomas of Woodstock was on board, then about sixteen years of age, afterwards constable of England, and duke of Gloucester, under which title he acted a turbulent part in the history of England, and left an unhappy name. It was well for them that they went in force, though they did not fall in with the enemies whom they apprehended; for there were disputes pending between the English and the Flemings, of that kind which were continually arising between merchant adventurers who were probably equally ready on either side to act as pirates whenever a tempting opportunity presented itself. A large Flemish fleet, under Hans Pieterszoon, had been at Rochelle, and there taken in their lading of wine: on their way homeward they touched at a port in Bretagne,

A.D. 1371.

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having left behind them in their inns, written on scrolls and walls, this threatening verse,

> Yet shall Danes
> Bring you wanes!*

Which rhymes being seen by an English poet, he immediately wrote underneath them,

> Here shall Danes
> Fett † their banes.

I have not noticed this relation in the text, because it is as improbable in all its circumstances as it is unsupported by any other authority.

* Despair or loss, ab A. S. wanian, to wane or diminish.
† Fetch.

called La Baye, for which port the English were bound; and having information of this, the Flemings waited for them there with the determination of giving them battle, .. an opportunity for which they had long desired.* The English knew not at first who they were; but seeing that a hostile greeting was intended for them, they made ready for receiving it accordingly. "So there began a fierce and terrible medley." The Flemings were more in number, and better provided for action, in so far that they were waiting for it. The English had the advantage of having been fitted out wholly for purposes of war; but for this also the Flemings were well furnished with men. It was one of those actions frequent in that age, both by land and by sea, in which, giving full way to mutual animosity, both sides disregarded all resources of art and skill, and trusted the decision to mere strength of heart and hand. The ships were fastened to each other with grappling irons; and after a severe battle of three hours, every Flemish ship, twenty-five in number, was captured, after a great carnage on both sides.† The king of England was wonderfully pleased at this unexpected success; and so much the more, because the Flemings had been the aggressors, and gave the first occasion, and yet were so entirely defeated. He sent their admiral to the Tower, and ordered out a fleet "to make sharp war upon all the merchants of Flanders, and to block up their ports; being," says his historian, "resolved by any means to pull down the pride of those people who had thus presumed to begin a war against him." This did not continue long. The men of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres, (which, forlorn as its appearance now is, was then one of the most industrious

* "Ils n'avoient désiré toute la saison autre chose, fors qu'ils peussent trouver les Anglois. Pour lors n'estoient point amis les Anglois et les Flamans : ains s'estoient en celle saison hariez et envahis sur mer, et tant que les Flamans y avoient perdu, dont il leur déplaisoit." — *Froissart*, Chron. 298.

† "The English," says Barnes, "were more than usually severe when they had the full mastery, because they (the Flemings) had been so bold as to begin the assault." I hope that the authority which he follows has been mistaken in this, .. as it must be, when it states the loss of the Flemings at above 4000 slain, and as many taken, which would be giving a complement of 320 men to each ship.

and prosperous cities in Europe,) held a council, and concluded it was most for their interest to be at peace with England, and not any longer to have the displeasure of king Edward, for the sake of their lord the earl of Flanders, who was now again wholly for the French." All the great towns of Flanders agreed in this, and sent deputies into England to treat for peace; peace was accordingly concluded, and the prisoners released, to the satisfaction of all parties except the earl, whose subjects had thus thought proper to negotiate for themselves.*

This was the last of Edward's naval victories. His day had been long and glorious; but his evening was overcast. "It seems," says Barnes, who, in minutely recording the events of his life, had contracted a personal regard for the hero of his tale, .. a natural and elevating feeling, whereby we are enabled, as it were, to form friendships with the dead, .. "it seems that God Almighty was willing to prepare this glorious monarch by some sensible affliction for his final dissolution; and that he might, by observing his own weakness, fall to a due consideration of God's power, and learn to despise the false grandeur and painted glories of the world, He was pleased from this time to blast both his maturest counsels and his strongest preparations; whereby, as a father doth his child, He weaned him from the delights and allurements of this life, and directed him to seek after a better. From henceforward we shall see his great web of victories continually to unravel, and the strong

* Froissart, Chron. 298. Barnes, 821, 822. Sueyro, i. 551, 552. Sueyro's words are, "Se alteraron grandemente las Ciudades de Flandes, que anteponiendo su conservacion y comercio al servicio del conde y rey de Francia embiaron deputados à Eduardo, confirmando la paz con ciertas condiciones y restituyendoles el Ingles los presos, con que se bolvieron alegres à sus casas."

"Thus lightly," says Barnes, "can vulgar minds be moved to begin a war; and when they are beaten, as readily sue for peace." Joshua lived at a time when it was the policy of a profligate administration to encourage a most unjust spirit of hostility against the Dutch, and the effect upon his honest mind is very evident in his relation of this battle. One of the political poems of those days ends with this pious imprecation against the Dutch: —

"May men un-dam you, and God d—n you all!"

spring of his success to run backward with much more speed than ever it was wound up."

A.D. 1372. The people of Gascony and Poictou had solicited Edward both by their letters and by sir Guischard Dangle, that if he could not spare one of the princes, his sons, yet at least he would send them the earl of Pembroke, whom, next to the princes, they loved and honoured most, for the experience they had had of his courage and conduct. To this the king consented; and the earl, whose first wife had been a daughter of the king's, was appointed accordingly to the command in Aquitaine. Edward consulted about the expedition chiefly with sir Guischard, as being a Poictevin lord, in whose judgment and fidelity he had entire confidence; nor was that confidence misplaced, though Guischard committed a fatal error in advising the king not to send a great force from England, because he might rely upon the loyalty of his subjects beyond sea. "When once my lord of Pembroke appears," says he, "he will find a good army in the field to join him. We shall make up 400 or 500 spears at least: with their several retinues, all ready to live and die for your service, so they may have their wages duly paid them." . . . "Sir Guischard, sir Guischard!" replied the king, "take you no care for gold and silver to maintain the war, when you are once come thither; for, I thank God, I have enough; and I am well content to employ it in that merchandise, seeing that it toucheth me and my realm." There went with the earl of Pembroke the lords Grandison and Touchet, sir Thomas of St. Albans, sir John Lawton, sir Simon Whitaker, sir John Curzon, sir Robert Beaufort, and sir John Grimstone, all English knights, besides the Poictevins, lord Guischard Dangle, the lord of Penan, the lord of Mortagne, sir Aymery de Tarse, and others. They repaired to Southampton, where they tarried fifteen days, in expectance of a wind: "then had they wind at will, and so entered into their ships, and departed from the haven in the name of God and St. George;"

. . " but most certainly," says Barnes, " in an unlucky hour!"

For king Charles of France, " who knew the most part of all the council in England," was well informed now as to what force was sent, and whither it was bound; and as he had sent land forces to assist the king of Castille, he obtained from that ally a strong navy, consisting of forty great ships and thirteen barks, well trimmed, and furnished with engines and with men. Ambrosio Boccanegra was admiral of this fleet, a Genoese in the Castillian service; and he had with him Cabeza de Vaca, Ruydiaz de Rojas, and another chief whom Froissart calls Ferrant de Pyon.* These lay at anchor about Rochelle and the Isle of Rhé, knowing that the English and Poictevins intended there to land; and when the earl of Pembroke arrived off the port, and perceived the enemy awaiting him, he saw that it was too late to avoid them, and that he must needs give them battle, though " the match was nothing equal, neither in numbers of men, nor bulk, nor strength of ships." Howbeit they comforted themselves and armed, and put themselves in good order, their archers before them, ready to fight. According to Froissart, who derived his account of this action from persons who were engaged in it, the Spaniards had cannon in their ships: but it is remarkable, that though he expressly mentions them, he says nothing of the effect that they produced; and it appears from his relation that they trusted to the old artillery, . . great stones, bars of iron, and balls of lead. " Anon," says the chronicler, " they began to approach, making great noise: the great ships of Spain took the wind, to fetch their turn on the English ships, whom they but little feared, and so came with a full sail on them; so thus, at the beginning, there was great cry and noise of the one and other, and the Englishmen

* This name I have not attempted to rectify. The two former were easily restored, being familiar to any person who is acquainted with Spanish history during the middle ages; the third, which Barnes supposes to be Rodrigo de Roses, I find in Pedro Lopez de Ayala's Chronica del Rey Don Henrique II.

bare themselves right well; and the earl of Pembroke knighted several of his young esquires for honour, and reminded his people that these were Spaniards, over whom they had triumphed so signally at Najara... There was a great battle and a hard: the Englishmen had enough to do; and, as I have heard reported," says Froissart, "by them that were there, the Englishmen and Poictevins desired greatly to acquire praise in arms, and there were never men that did more valiantly; for they were but few people in regard to the Spaniards, and also far less number of ships, and less in size; therefore it might well be marvelled how they endured so long: but the noble knighthood that was in them recomforted them, and held them in their strength; and if they had been like in ships, the Spaniards had taken but little advantage of them. They held themselves so close together, that none durst abide their strokes, unless they were well armed and pavaised; but the casting down of blocks of lead, great stones, and bars of iron, hurt and troubled them marvellously sore, and wounded divers knights and squires."

This action was in sight of Rochelle, in the mouth of the channel leading to that city. The inhabitants were at that time subjects of the king of England; but they were disaffected, and this the Spaniards knew. No effort, therefore, was made to assist his fleet, and the action continued till night, when the fleets separated and cast anchor, the English having lost two barges, laden with provisions, all the men on board which were put to death. Unequal as the contest was, the weaker party made no attempt to escape a renewal of it, either because they hoped for succour from the city, or because they were too high-minded to fly from any danger however great. Jehan de Hardanne, who was seneschal of Rochelle, called upon the mayor, Jehan Chauderon, and the chief burgesses, to muster the strength of the people, and in such vessels as were there to go and aid their countrymen and allies, who all the day had so valiantly fought with their enemies. But they, "who had

no mind to any such matter, replied, that they had enough to do to keep the town; that they were not men for the sea, and could therefore do no service against the Spaniards upon the water; but that if the battle were on the land, they would then gladly bear a part in it." When no representations of the seneschal could prevail over this disposition, he and the seigneurs de Tannay-bouton, Messire Jaques de Surgeres, and Messire Maubrun de Linieres placed a sufficient garrison in the castle, armed themselves, and, with such men as would accompany them (an inconsiderable number), went on board four barks, and at daybreak, when the tide served, went out and joined the earl of Pembroke. He thanked them heartily for their good will; and when they told him how the Rochellers had refused to come to his assistance, he answered and said, "Well, then, we must abide the grace of God and the event of fortune; and I trust we shall find a time to make these men of Rochelle rue their ill dealing."

Early in the morning, when the flood began, the Spaniards weighed anchor, and with sound of trumpet set themselves in order, as they had done the day before, and took advantage of the wind to close in the English. They and the Poictevins prepared to receive them, and drew together, and set their archers before them. The enemy, whose object it was to engage as soon as possible in close combat, where the number and height of their ships gave them a sure advantage, succeeded in grappling with the English vessels: the action, nevertheless, continued till three in the afternoon. Already sir Aymery de Tarse and sir John Lawton had fallen by the earl's side. The earl's ship was now grappled by four Spanish ships; Cabesa de Vaca being in one, and Ferrant de Pyon in another of them. On all sides it was boarded: lord Touchet, sir Simon Whittaker, and the seigneur Jehan de Mortagne were killed, the earl himself was made prisoner, and with him sir Guischard, sir Robert Beaufort, sir John Curzon, and sir John Grimstone; and all on board either suffered the same fate or worse. Other

ships still maintained the struggle; but at last all were overmastered, so that none escaped being either taken or slain. But when the Spaniards had taken the masters, they slew no more varlets; for the masters prayed for their people, and entreated that they would spare them, saying, they would pay ransom for all. The ship which had the money on board for payment of the soldiers, to the amount of 20,000*l.*, was sunk; and yet great treasure is said to have fallen into the hands of the conquerors. "But this was nothing comparable to the loss which England sustained in the death and capture of so many distinguished persons; and yet the ill consequences of this day were far greater than the loss itself. King Edward received here the greatest blow that ever he had felt; for this discomfiture drew after it the loss of all that he had ever possessed in France, either by inheritance or conquest, Bayonne, Bourdeaux, and Calais only excepted." *

"All that day," says Froissart, "which was the vigil of St. John the Baptist, and all that night, and the next day till it was noon, the Spaniards lay at anchor before Rochelle, triumphing and making great joy. And when noon was past, and the tide came on, they weighed anchor, and spread their sails, and so departed with a merry noise of trumpets and clarions; their masts and fore decks being adorned with long streamers, and rich pennons, and standards, emblazoned with the arms of Castille, which made a glorious show as they waved about in the wind; and it was beautiful to behold them." † After a passage which was protracted by contrary winds, they arrived at Santander; and there they brought their prisoners into the castle, bound in chains, after the Spanish manner, says Barnes, of treating their captives, which was far from that courteous and more humane way of intercourse held between the French,

* Froissart, Chron. 302. 4. Barnes, 829. 832.

† "Et estoit moult grant beauté de les veoir," says Froissart, which lord Berners translates,—"So that it was great pleasure to behold them;" forgetting, as perhaps Froissart himself did, that the author is relating the defeature of his friends.

English, and Scotch of those days. They received, however, very different treatment from the king, who, when they were brought to Burgos, sent his eldest son, the infante Don Juan, to meet them, and entertained them honourably, though he soon placed them in safe custody,..as one who was not conscious enough of honour in himself to repose any trust in that of others. Pembroke was confined in the castle of Curiel awhile, till he and Guischard, the seigneur de Penan, and some others, were delivered over to Bertrand du Guesclin, that their ransom might be accounted in payment of the sum due to him for his services, .. the price of Henrique's kingdom, and of his brother Pedro's blood. Many of the other chiefs died in captivity; there were among them, according to the Spanish account, seventy knights who wore gilt spurs.*

From this time one ill success followed another, the king of France following up his advantages wisely and vigorously, and the constable Bertrand du Guesclin, being the greatest commander whom France produced during the middle ages. In the course of the same year, Du Guesclin laid siege to Thouars, into which place most of the lords who still remained true to England had retired. The siege was closely pressed, great engines, which played against the town night and day, having been brought thither from Poictiers and Rochelle; till at length the besieged proposed a truce for themselves and their land till the ensuing Michaelmas; they in the mean time to send to their lord the king of England, and certify him of their condition; and if they were not by that time succoured, either by him or by one of his sons in person, they engaged then to yield themselves to the obedience of the French king. The proposal was accepted, and the French lords departed from before Thouars in consequence; for each party seems to have acted in this case with a just reliance upon the good faith of the other. When the messengers

* Pedro Lopez de Ayala, Cronica del Rey Don Enrique II. an. vi. cap. 10. Froissart, c. 304. Barnes 834.

arrived in England, and Edward understood from their report "with how little war he had lost the places and countries that had cost him so much to win," he observed, that he had never known a king less addicted to arms than king Charles V.; who, nevertheless, had given him more trouble than both his warlike predecessors. And he declared, that he would cross the seas in such strength as to be able to give battle to the whole power of France; nor would he ever return to England till he had recovered all that he had lost, or, with the residue, lost himself in the endeavour. This resolution was such as might have been expected from Edward, and such as became him. Ambition had ceased to be his ruling passion: since he made peace at Chartres he seems to have been sincerely desirous of maintaining it, and to have had no other motive for war than the just one of preserving what that peace was to have secured to him, and of protecting his adherents.

A summons was sent through the realm, requiring all men of a certain age and degree to repair in arms to Sandwich and the adjacent ports by an appointed day, there to take the seas with the king and his sons, the Black Prince, John of Gaunt, and the earl of Cambridge. Four hundred great ships, besides other vessels, were collected for their passage. Parliament was assembled; and, to prevent, as far as such precautions can prevent such evils, any dispute concerning the succession, it was there solemnly declared, that in case the king or the prince should die in this expedition, the prince's only living son, Richard of Bourdeaux, was to succeed, according to right, unto the crown of England: he was also constituted *custos regni* during their absence. Prayers were ordered in all churches for the good success of the voyage; and on Monday the 30th of August, about nine in the morning, Edward went on board the Grace de Dieu at Sandwich, and sailed with as great a fleet "as ever any king before had carried forth of England." Three thousand men-at-arms were embarked, and 10,000 archers, besides other foot soldiers.

The expenses of the expedition are said to have exceeded 900,000 marks. The loyal Gascons were prepared to join him with their utmost forces; and, on the other hand, the French king assembled all his might, as if, in the belief that fortune had set in in his favour, he had determined upon meeting Edward before Thouars, and there giving him battle. But Edward had never been elated by prosperity, and his humiliation was not to be inflicted by the power of man. The elements in their courses fought against him. In vain did he beat about, coasting Normandy and Bretagne, with the intent of landing about Rochelle: "that strange fortune," says Barnes, "who before was always ready to waft this prince over, but difficult to convey him back, was now quite otherwise disposed, and became an eminent hinderer of his designs; so that for this success France was beholden to the most inconstant of the elements, or rather to the benign providence of Him who governs both the winds and the seas." For days and weeks the fleet contended against contrary winds, even till the day appointed for the relief or the surrender of Thouars came. When it thus became impossible for him to arrive in time, he turned homeward, yielding to necessity, and broke up his armament.*

A.D. 1373.

There was a report in the following year that a certain sir Yvan of Wales, who was in the French king's service, and who some time before had made a successful descent upon the isle of Guernsey, was about to infest the English coast with a powerful squadron, and to burn and lay waste the country. The earl of Salisbury, therefore, William Montagu, was appointed to guard the English seas, being at that time retained by indenture to serve the king with 300 men-at-arms, of whom twenty besides himself were to be knights, 279 esquires, and 300 archers. The fleet consisted of forty great ships, besides smaller ones. With these he sailed from the coast of Cornwall directly for St. Maloes; and

* Froissart, Chron. 311. Barnes, 844, 845.

finding in the haven seven large Spanish carracks, he burnt them all.* Probably the strength of the intended expedition consisted in these carracks, for it was not heard of afterwards. †

The remainder of Edward's days were few and evil. He had, not long before, lost his excellent queen Philippa, after a happy union of forty years. The Black Prince, who should have been his worthy successor, was summoned before him to his account, being consumed in mid age by a slow and wasting malady. One after another, his bravest captains had disappeared, cut off by pestilence, or by the chances of war, or in the course of nature. He had lost the greater part of his continental possessions, . . not in consequence of any signal defeat, nor through any defect of policy on his part, or superiority of it in the French councils; but by the course of fortune, without any failure of strength, or want of vigour, or loss of reputation. Never was there a king in whose history the will of Providence may seem to have been more clearly manifested: so greatly had his victories exceeded all bounds of reasonable hope, so much had his reverses surpassed all reasonable apprehension. Well might Edward have exclaimed with the Preacher, "that all is vanity," when he had survived the wife of his bosom, the son of his youth and of his proudest and dearest hopes, his prosperity, his popularity, the respect of his chiefs and the love of his people; for, after the loss of his son, his moral and intellectual strength gave way, and he fell under sub-

* Barnes, 852.

† Ayala, however, says that king Henrique II sent a great fleet of gallеys and ships to aid the king of France in 1374, don Ferrand Sanchez de Tovar being the admiral; that they did much damage in the Isle of Wight; and that a great French fleet joined it under M. Jean de Vienne, and committed great ravages upon the coast of England. Cronica del Rey Don Enrique II. Año 9. cap. 9.

The old printed copies and some MSS. of this chronicle, says the Isle of Duc; but, in an abridgement, the modern editor, don Eugenio de Llaguno Amerola, finds it written Duye; which, he says, "Es mas conforme al nombre vulgar Inglés Wight, de donde se corrumpio en nuestra lingua Duyc." After this we need not wonder at finding names so corrupted that no conjecture can set them right

I perceive, however, a more material error here: Ayala has here related what did not take place till three years afterwards.

jection to an artful and rapacious woman. In this, however, posterity has been just, that it has judged of him, not by the failure of his fortunes and the weakness of his latter days, but by the general tenour and the one great and abiding consequence of his long and glorious reign. The name of Edward III., as it must always be illustrious in history, so will it ever be dear to all true-hearted Englishmen; for by him was that superiority of British courage, by sea and by land, asserted and proved at Sluys and at Cressy, which, in our own time, has been confirmed at Trafalgar and at Waterloo.

CHAP. VI.

FROM THE DEATH OF EDWARD III. TO THE ACCESSION OF HENRY IV.

A.D. 1377—1399.

It was in honour either of the battle of Sluys, or the victory which he had obtained over the Spanish fleet off Winchelsea, that Edward III. caused the noble to be struck, then the largest and handsomest of all gold coins, whereon he was represented, armed and crowned, in a ship, and holding a drawn sword. When, in the peace with king Jean, he renounced his title to Normandy, the islands dependent thereupon were expressly reserved, that he might preserve his jurisdiction at sea entire *, both he and his parliament, on every occasion, asserting the hereditary right of the kings of England to the sovereignty of the seas.

That maritime power was necessary for the strength and security of England, was well understood by the English statesmen in that age; and that this power could not be supported but by foreign trade: and if

* Campbell, i. 148.

their measures for promoting both were sometimes injudicious, and produced effects contrary to what were designed, the errors of their inexperience may appear venial indeed, when we call to mind the sins of modern legislation. One of their great objects was to encourage foreign merchants; thinking, as it appears, that foreign trade might be carried on with more discretion and less risk through their hands. With this view, the exclusive privilege of importing wines* from Gascony was given them, and of exporting wool†; and laws were passed to protect them from any exactions in the English ports, where certain persons pretended a right of pre-emption.‡ They were to be exempted also from that most vexatious of all grievances, the delay of justice; and if any wrong were done them, the justices were charged to do them speedy right, "according to the law-merchant, from day to day and hour to hour, without driving them to sue at common law."§ And forasmuch as murders and robberies upon merchants and others, passing through the realm with their goods, had become more frequent, an old statute was revived, "to the intent that merchant-aliens might have the greater will and courage" to come into this kingdom: by that statute the hundreds were made answerable for any felonies and robberies committed within their bounds; and no longer space than forty days was allowed them, in which time they were to agree for the robbery or offence, or produce the bodies of the offenders.|| The exclusive privileges granted to foreign merchants, with a view to the promotion of commerce, proved injurious to the shipping of the country, inasmuch as they carried on their trade in foreign bottoms. It was greatly injured also by the inconvenient and oppressive manner in which, upon any emergency, a naval force was raised: at such times all native ships in all the ports were embargoed for the public service, and were frequently detained for two or

* 34 Edward III.
† 9 Edward III.
‡ Ibid.
§ 27 Edward III. stat. 2. c. 19.
|| 28 Edward III. c. 11.

three months, or longer, without any indemnification for the owners, or pay for the sailors.* From this grievance, which was often complained of by the commons, foreigners were exempted; and, owing to this cause, and the great use of foreign bottoms, though commerce flourished, and the balance of trade was greatly in favour of this country †, the shipping decayed; and, in the latter years of Edward's reign, no security was felt either by sea or land ‡ for want of a sufficient naval force.

The first of these causes was an evil which, though the government could not but understand, it was unable to remove. To have supported an adequate navy was beyond its ordinary means: the time was come when imposts could no longer be levied by the king's authority without the concurrence of parliament; and the commons were more ready in the discharge of their duty to present the grievance, than to grant the supplies by which alone it could be removed; but which, by taking the burden from the particular class that it aggrieved, and making it general, as it ought to have been, would have produced more general, and therefore [illegible], complaints. The impolicy of encouraging fore[illegible]ping, to the injury of our own, admitted of an easy remedy; and, early in the ensuing reign, it was enacted [illegible]at none of the king's liege people should from thenceforth ship any merchandise, either for exporting [illegible]om t[illegible]alm or importing into it, in any other ships than those o[illegible] the king's liegemen, on pain of forfeiting all merchandise so shipped; one third of it to the benefit of the person who should duly espy and prove such transgression.§ The reason assigned for this first navigation act was, "to increase the navy of England," which, it was said, is now very greatly diminished. In the next year, however, it was deemed necessary to modify the ordinance, and declare, that it was to be enforced only in places where "good and

A.D. 1381.

1382.

* Bree's Cursory Sketch, 176, 177. Henry, iv. 479.
† Henry, iv. 470. ‡ Bree, 176.
§ 5 Richard II. stat. 1. c. 3.

sufficient ships of the king's liegemen should be found: where there were not such, it should be lawful for merchants to hire and freight other vessels.*

Richard II. had succeeded to an uneasy throne. Upon the decease of his illustrious grandfather, "there was great sorrow," says Froissart, "made in England, and incontinent all the passages of the realm were stopped, that none should issue out of the land; for they would not that the death of the king should be known in France, till they had set the realm in some order." When the king of France heard of his death, he said, that he had reigned right nobly and valiantly, and that well he deserved to be placed in the number of the worthies. And forthwith he assembled a great number of the nobles and prelates of his kingdom, and performed obsequies for Edward in the holy chapel in his palace at Paris.† But this generous and natural feeling led not to a renewal of peace between the two countries. A truce had just expired, during which France had obtained a great supply of ships and galleys, from her ally the king of Castille. Don Ferrand Sanchez de Tovar‡ commanded this Spanish fleet: a French squadron, under Jean de Vienne, joined him. To this person the vigour which the French at this time displayed by sea has been chiefly ascribed: he used to say, that "the English were nowhere so weak as in their own country;" a remark which must hold good of most nations, because the weak are always found at home, and it is the strong who are sent abroad to make war. The brave Welsh adventurer, sir Yvan, was in the expedition. They made a descent on the Sussex coast a few days after Edward's death, burned the town of Rye, which so often suffered in such invasions, and there slew men, women, and all they found. The festivities of the coronation were disturbed by this news; upon which the earls of Cambridge and Buckingham were immediately despatched to Dover, with a force for its pro-

A.D. 1377.

* 6 Richard II. stat. 1. c 8.

† Froissart, Chron. 326.

‡ Ferraunt Sanse, Froissart calls him.

tection; and the earl of Salisbury to Southampton. Meantime the enemy landed in the Isle of Wight*, and burned several towns there; "and though they were repelled from the castle by the valiant manhood of sir Hugh Tirrel, captain thereof, who laid no small number of them on the ground; yet they constrained the men of the isle to give them 1000 marks of silver to save the residue of their houses and goods." They burned Portsmouth also, and, proceeding westward, burned Dartmouth and Plymouth. Then, coasting back again, they made an attempt upon Southampton; but sir John Arundel was there, with a number of men-at-arms and archers, who defended the town, and chased the invaders to their ships. From thence they proceeded towards Dover, burned Hastings, and attacked Winchelsea, a stronger place, where they were bravely repulsed by the abbot of Battle. They then turned back, and landed at Rottingdean, where the prior of Lewes, sir Thomas Cheyney, and sir John Fallesley, collected the country people, and encountered them with better courage than success; for the prior and the two knights were taken, and above 100 of the English slain: the enemy, however, suffered considerably in this action, and, being satisfied with the booty they had gained and the devastation they had committed, they returned to France.†

A few weeks afterward, while the impression of these insults and injuries was fresh, parliament assembled, and sir Peter de la Mare, who is the first speaker of the house of commons upon record, declared, in the name of that house, that the realm was at that time in greater danger than it had ever been. He complained, that whereas merchants were masters of their own ships, and had

* Vuyque, lord Berners writes the name, which, as Vu stand for v v, and v v for w, is making Froissart appear less intelligible than he is. His topography, indeed, is not so easily adjusted; for he tells us, that in this Isle of Wyque the enemy burnt the towns of Lamende (Lymington ?), Dartemonde, Plemende, Plesume (?), and many others; after which they coasted on, and attacked the port of Poq (?) c. 327.

† Holinshed, ii. 715.

the free disposal of them, yet formerly one town had more good ships than the whole nation had now. And, commending the feats of chivalry for which the English had been so renowned, he lamented the decay of that spirit; by reason of which, he said, the honour of the realm did, and would, daily decrease. "Part of the prayer of the commons was, that the charge of the king's household might be borne by the revenues of the crown, so that what was granted for the war might be appropriated to that use only."* The spirit of chivalry had decayed, because it had lost its leaders. Men whose restless activity would have been directed abroad under a strong government, busied it in intrigues at home, at the close of Edward's reign, and upon the succession of a minor in his eleventh year. Sea and land forces were now raised, and great sums borrowed for that purpose, till means should be provided by parliament. A great navy put to sea, under the earl of Buckingham, the duke of Bretagne, the lords Latimer and Fitzwalter, sir Robert Knolles, and others: their object was to intercept the Spaniards, who were gone to Sluys; but they were twice driven back by storms, so that the design was frustrated.†

A.D. 1378.

The enemy, meantime, were always active. There was a Scotchman, John Mercer by name, who, having been captured at sea, had been imprisoned in Scarborough castle. His son, in revenge for this, got together "certain sail of Scotch, French, and Spaniards; came to Scarborough, and there made prize of all the ships that he found. So much damage had been done, and so much was apprehended, from these sea-rovers, that John Philpot, "that worshipful citizen of London," lamenting the negligence of those that should have provided against such inconveniences, made forth a fleet at his own charges, strongly furnished with men-of-war and munition necessary." This was more like an alderman of the Saxon times than of those in which Philpot held what was then purely a civic office. His adventure was upon a great scale, and fortune favoured it: "the men-

* Parl. Hist i. 160.

† Holinshed, ii. 718.

of-war meeting with the same Mercer, accompanied with his own ships, and fifteen other Spaniards, that were newly joined with them, set upon them, and so valiantly behaved themselves, that they took the said Mercer, with all that were then in his company; so recovering again the ships that were taken from Scarborough, besides great riches which were found aboard, as well in the fifteen Spanish ships as in the others, that were of the retinue belonging to the same Mercer." The alderman was called to account for "presuming thus far as to set forth a navy of men-of-war, without the advice of the king's council; but he made his answer in such wise unto the earl of Stafford, and others that laid the fault to his charge, that he was permitted to depart without further trouble for that matter."* .. Philpot pleading his own cause before the council, would have afforded subject for a noble scene to a dramatist of the Elizabethan age.

John of Gaunt had at that time retired from the court; but, as the chronicler plainly says, he was yet desirous to have the money in his hands that had been granted by the last parliament; and he obtained it upon undertaking to defend the realm against all invasions for a year's space. He therefore provided a navy, and hired nine ships from Bayonne to assist him: these were fortunate; for, on their way to England, they fell in with a Spanish fleet of merchantmen, and took fourteen sail, laden with wine and other goods. Before his preparations were complete, the king of Navarre, who was anew engaged in war with France, demised to the king of England, by an extraordinary, if not singular, agree-

* Holinshed, ii. 719. It was not till he had applied to the king's council, representing the great damage done by this piratical fleet, and imploring their aid, that Philpot took upon himself the duty which the government neglected; "for which action," says Trussell, "he incurred the hard censure of most of the noble men, from whom he seemed to have snatcht, by this his fortunate attempt, the native cognizance of true nobility." When Stafford "objected against him the unlawfulness of the act, without authority, he being but a private man, to attempt and levy arms, .. Philpot, with a kind of undaunted resolution, not only justified the act as though not altogether lawful, yet very expedient, being done for the honour of God and the king, and the security of the republic, but retorted the objection of improvidence and slothful neglect upon the earl and the rest of the council, so that they were much to seek for a reply." — *Contin. of Daniel's Hist.* p. 2.

ment *, his fortress of Cherbourg for a certain yearly rent, " whereby the Englishmen might have free entry into Normandy when they would, as well to aid the king of Navarre in his necessity, as to work any enterprise that should be thought expedient to the advantage of the king of England, as occasion served." Accordingly, the earls of Salisbury and Arundel were sent over to take possession of the place; and an armament was despatched to garrison it. But the obtaining possession of Cherbourg " brought not so much joy to the English nation as the mishap at the going forth of this armament caused lamentation and heaviness;" for, upon first entering the sea, " sir Philip and sir Peter Courtenay discovered a certain number of ships that were enemies, and undiscreetly entered amongst them." Suddenly the Spanish fleet came upon them; so that the English ships that were in company with sir Philip and sir Peter were not able to make their party good. Sir Philip got away by flight, grievously wounded, and with the loss of many men. Sir Peter was taken prisoner, with a few other knights that were with him: and these, it seems, were, because of their rank, the only persons to whom quarter was given; " and the most part of all the valiant esquires of Somersetshire and Devonshire, being there aboard with him, were slain and drowned, which was esteemed no small loss to the whole commonwealth." † When war was carried on in such a spirit, it may seem wonderful that Europe was not brought wholly to a state of barbarism: and assuredly this must have been the inevitable consequence, had it not been for the humanising influence of Christianity.

A.D. 1379.

The duke of Bretagne was at this time in England,

* This part of the agreement is not mentioned by Froissart. " I shall show you," he says, in lord Berners' language, " how this treaty went between these two kings. One thing there was: the king of Navarre should from thenceforth always be true English, and should never make peace with the realm of France, nor with the king of Castille, without the knowledge and consent of the king of England; and if the king of England, or any of his men, by their puissance, could get any towns or castles that the king of Navarre ought to have in Normandy, against the Frenchman, that the same towns or castles should abide for ever to be English, the sovereignty ever reserved to the king of Navarre." cap. 329.

† Holinshed, ii. 719.

having been expelled from his own country by the French, and by those Breton lords who were of the French party: his return, however, was desired in many places, and some were still maintained for him. One castle commanding a harbour which was frequented by the English, was held for him by sir John Clarke, "a right valiant knight." There were several English vessels lying there; the French were informed of this, and laid a plan for capturing or destroying them. With this view, they sent in a galley to set them on fire; and, "by so doing, if fortune so would, to train the Englishmen forth, till they should fall into the laps of four other galleys, which they laid as it had been in ambush. Even as they devised so it came to pass: the English, seeing their vessels in danger to be burnt, ran every man aboard, to save them and the goods within them; among the rest, sir John himself hastened on board one of the ships, meaning to take such part as his men did;" the galley then withdrew as if taking flight; he followed the decoy, and presently the incautious English found that they had fallen into a snare, and were unawares attacked at advantage. Sir John Clarke, perceiving how the case stood, "laid about him like a giant, causing his company still to draw back, whilst he, resisting his enemies, did show such proof of his valiancy, that they were much astonished therewith." He so manfully behaved himself, that most part of his people had time to recover land; but, when he that had thus preserved others should have leaped out of the ship to save himself, he was stricken on the thigh with an axe, and, the limb being almost severed from the body, he fell into the enemies' hands, and died presently, "leaving a remembrance behind him of many worthy acts that his valiancy achieved, to his high praise and great commendation. The bark of York was lost at the same time, "being a proper vessel;" but this was a loss to both parties; for, the enemy having boarded her, and thinking to carry her away, she sunk, and the captors and prisoners went down in her.*

* Holinshed, ii. 723.

Clarke had been fellow in arms with sir Hugh Calverly, the most distinguished then surviving captain, who had been trained in king Edward's wars, and who, having distinguished himself when deputy-governor of Calais, was now made admiral, being joined in commission in that office with sir Thomas Percy. Their first service was to convoy the duke of Bretagne home; his people, impatient of the exactions which they suffered from the French, having earnestly invited him to return. They landed in the port of Guarande, near St. Maloes; and at his landing he was likely to have lost "all such furniture, as well of victuals, apparel, hangings, bedding, armour, and other things, which either he or his train had brought with them." For the French galleys were hovering about, espying him; and as soon as he and his company were landed, before the baggage-ships could enter the haven, which was somewhat strait, their galleys bore down upon them, and would have taken them, if Calverly, like his poor old comrade Clarke, but with better fortune, had not hastened with his archers to the rescue. He caused the master of his ship, "even against his will," to turn back in the face of the enemy, and through his manful prowess the galleys were expelled, and the ships saved; for, according to his wonted valiancy, he would not return till he saw all others in safety; and then, defending himself as well as he might, he withdrew into the haven, and landed safely.*

When the duke went to Nantes, there came to see him, says Froissart, barons, prelates, knights, and squires, ladies, and damsels, offering him their services, and putting themselves under his obeisance, complaining greatly of the Frenchmen, who did much hurt in the country. The duke appeased them, and said, "My friends, I shall shortly have comfort out of England; for, without aid of England, I cannot well defend the land against the Frenchmen, for they are too

* Hollinshed, 721.

big for us, seeing that we are not all one in our own country. But when the aid that the king of England shall send us be once come, if they have done us wrong, we shall quit them again."* The succour which he promised was provided, and was a "sufficient power, undoubtedly, to have done a great enterprise," if what man proposes were not in a great degree dependent upon casualties that he can neither foresee nor forefend. Sir John Arundel had the command of this expedition: there went with him the two admirals, Calverly and Percy, sir William Elmham, sir Thomas Morews, sir Thomas Banester, and many other knights and esquires. A more unhappy fleet has seldom sailed from the British shores. They set forth from Southampton. "The first day the wind was reasonable good for them; but against night it turned contrary, and whether they would or not, they were driven to the coast of Cornwall: the wind was so sore and streynable that they could cast none anchor, and also they durst not;" so that, looking "presently to be cast away, they were scattered here and there, and driven they knew not whither." The ship where Arundel was aboard was driven to the coast of Ireland, and they ran it upon an isle just as it was going to pieces. The master, who was a skilful seaman of Blackney, in Norfolk, Robert Rust by name, was the first that got to land, "giving example to others how to shift for themselves." But he did this with no selfish disregard of any besides himself; for when he saw that sir John Arundel had got upon the sands, and "as one, thinking himself past all danger," was beginning to shake his wet garments there, he well knowing the dangerous state in which he yet stood, ran to him, and "raught to him his hand, enforcing himself to pluck him to the shore; but, whilst he thus took care for another man's safety and neglected his own, they both perished together; for through a mighty billow of the raging seas they were both overthrown," and with the return of the

* Froissart, ii. 355.

wave drawn into the deep, so that they could never recover foot-hold again, but were drowned."

To the like end came sir Thomas Banester, sir Nicholas Trumpington, and sir Thomas Dale, "impeaching each other, as they leapt forth of the ship." One Musard, an esquire, "a most seemly personage and a bold," and another esquire named Depioke, being almost out of danger, were fetched away by the surge, and so perished with many others. They that escaped to land in that isle found nothing there to relieve their miseries but bare ground; so that, wanting fire and other succour, many died of cold and exhaustion. "The residue, that were lusty and wise withal, ran up and down, and sometimes wrestling, and otherwise chafing themselves, remained there in great misery, from the Thursday till Sunday at noon; at what time, when the sea was appeased and waxen calm, the Irishmen that dwelt over against this isle, on the main, came and fetched them thence, and relieved them the best they could, being almost dead through travail, hunger, and cold." Rust, the master, was much lamented, because he who was an old and experienced seaman had seen such signs of ill weather, that he had advised Arundel not to put to sea at that time, but had by him been constrained to do so against his own will and better judgment. "The said sir John Arundel," says Holinshed, "lost not only his life, but all his furniture and apparel for his body, which was very sumptuous, so that it was thought to surmount the apparel of any king; for he had two-and-fifty new suits of apparel of cloth of gold, or tissue, as was reported; all the which, together with his horses and geldings, amounting to the value of 10,000 marks, was lost in the sea." He was not lamented like the old master; and, indeed, he deserved a worse fate. The chronicler says, that in this case outrageous wickedness was justly punished, and that the catastrophe which befell these men was regarded as a judgment; for, not content with abusing men's wives and daughters in the ports before they took ship, they carried them off with them to sea...by

persuasion or by force... and when the tempest raged they threw them overboard, "either for that they would not be troubled with their lamentable noise and crying, or for that they thought so long as they had such women aboard with them, whom they had abused so long, God would not cease the rage of the tempest." The chronicler who repeats this believed the accusation, which, indeed, would not have arisen unless the character of the men had been such as to render it credible: but he perceived how presumptuous it was to affirm that a particular judgment should have brought on a general storm; "for where," he says, "the Spanish and French fleets were abroad at the same time, being assembled together to annoy the coasts of this land, their ships were likewise tossed and turmoiled, insomuch that the damage that they sustained was thought far to pass that which happened to the English navy."

Five-and-twenty English ships were lost in this storm, with a great many horses, and above 1000 men. Sir Hugh Calverly escaped; "but never in his life before," says Froissart, "was he so nigh his death, for all who were in his ship, except himself and seven mariners, were drowned: they who were saved took hold of planks and masts, and the strength of the wind brought them to the sands. Howbeit they had drank water enough, whereof they were right sick, and evil at ease." The ships that rode out the storm were "sore tormented, and in great peril:" they put back to England; and "thus broke up that journey, whereby the duke of Bretagne could have no comfort of the Englishmen, which was right contrarious to him; for all that season, and the winter following, the Frenchmen made him right sore war." * The loss which the enemy sustained by this storm was only that of the ships and men that perished: none of their plans were frustrated, and they were soon again in force upon the seas. Olivier de Clisson, the butcher, in command of a number of ships and galleys, French and Spanish, invaded the

A.D. 1380.

* Froissart, Chron. 356. Holinshed, ii. 725, 726.

western and southern coast, "making prizes and spoiling and burning sundry towns, and so continued to endamage the English people that inhabited near to the sea-side all the summer following." Part of them, however, were driven off by some of our west-country ships, when the people were roused to exert themselves; and they were pursued into the harbour of Kinsale, where the English and Irish assailed them, slew some 400, took their chief captains *, captured four of their barges with a ballenger, and recaptured one-and-twenty English vessels. This, however, was but a small part of the enemies' force: the Spanish fleet alone consisted of twenty galleys, under D. Ferrand Sanchez de Tovar; and they, "with the French galleys still lying on the seas, when they espied any advantage, would land their people, and do what mischief they could, in taking preys, and burning towns and villages; although now and then they came short to their vessels again, losing sometimes 100, sometimes fourscore, that were overtaken by the Englishmen that came forth against them." Portsmouth, Hastings, Winchelsea, and Rye, places which generally suffered in such invasions, were burnt by them; and at Winchelsea the abbot of Battle, who was a brave soldier of the church militant, was defeated when he came with his people to succour the town as he had done before, and "one of his monks that was then in armour with him was taken." Finally, this boldness so far increased, that they entered the Thames, and came up to Gravesend, most part of which town they burnt; and having burnt and spoiled many places on both sides the river, without receiving any hurt themselves, they returned to France, carrying with them "both rich spoils and good prisoners." †

* I cannot rectify the names, which are thus given by Holinshed:—"Gonsalve de Verar, and his brother John Martin de Motrigo; Turgo, lord of Morante, also the lord of Reith, Péers Martin of Vermew (Bermeo); John Modet of Vermew; the seneschal of Wargarel; the seneschal of St. Andrew; Cornelio of St. Sebastiano; Paschale de Biskaye; John Martinis; Sopegorge of St. Sebastiano. The four notable captains who escaped to do farther mischief were Martin Grantz, (Garcia?) John Peres Mantago, (Montijo?; John Husca Gitario, (Huerta Gutierrez?) and one Garcias of St. Sebastiano.

† Fabyan, 529 Holinshed, ii. 731. Ayala (Cronica del Rey Don Juan I.

Such hostilities would, in the better days of Edward III., have roused a becoming spirit: but there were already symptoms that this was likely to be a feeble and disturbed reign; weakness was showing itself in the young king, faction in his ambitious kinsmen, and discontent among the people.* The prosperity which the war, while it was prosperous, had introduced, had not reached the great body of the population; but the taxation which was necessary for supporting the war bore upon them, and produced that impatience for bringing it to an end, which, whenever it prevails, must render it impossible for peace to be procured, otherwise than with dishonour.* The commons, when in the second year of this reign, they were asked for supplies to make such an expedition as might be for the destruction of their enemies, replied, that the people were in a lower condition than ever, by reason of the great sums that they had already paid, and also because of the murrain among their cattle, and the enemy's burnings and depredations upon the sea-coasts. Flour, corn, and cattle, they said, were at so low a rate, that no money could be raised; wherefore they prayed the king to excuse them, as not being able of mere poverty to bear any farther charge. And they expressed a suspicion that the money which had before been granted could not have been expended, but that there must needs be a great sum in the treasury. To this it was replied, upon the testimony of William Walworth and John Philpot (great names in the history of London), who had been receivers of the subsidies of wool, "that every penny thereof had been expended upon the war, and that none of it came to the high treasurer of England, or any other person, to the use of the king; and that the revenues of the crown, considering the

an. ii. c. 1.) says of the Spanish galleys, of which ten were supplied conformably to treaty, and the other ten equipped at the expense of the French king, — "Ficieron grand guerra este año á los Ingleses por la mar y é entraron por el rio de Artamisa, fasta cerca de la cibdad de Londres, á dó galeas de enemigos nunca entraron." The Spaniards have not often related the exploits of their countrymen so modestly.

annuities and other charges upon them, granted by his father and grandfather, were so small, that without the customs of wool and the lands of the priors aliens, the honour and estate of the king could not be maintained." They demanded to see the accounts, and the accounts accordingly were laid before them: the king, it was premised, having "so willed and commanded, of his own motion, to please the commons; not that it was of right for him so to do, or that he was obliged to it, but only by reason of their request." When the commons had examined the enrolment, receipts, and expenses, they declared themselves well satisfied with them, as being honourable for the king and kingdom; but they objected that the sum of 46,000*l.*, which had been expended in keeping the marches of Calais, Brest, Cherburg, Gascony, and Ireland, ought not to be charged upon them; because it seemed to them that they were not bound to bear any foreign charge. To this it was answered by the king's counsel, "that Gascony and the forts beyond sea were barbicans, and, as it were, outworks and defences to England; and that if they were well guarded, and the sea well kept, the kingdom would be quiet, .. otherwise it could not be so." *

A.D. 1381. The appearance of an enemy's fleet in the Thames was so far from kindling an English spirit, that it seemed shamefully to extinguish it; and the commons petitioned that an end might be made of the war, which was in great part maintained, they said, by the goods that the enemy took from the English, to the great dishonour of the government and nation, and destruction of the whole realm. Ill must they have been informed in the history of their own country, or little must they have remembered it, not to understand, that peace, solicited from such motives, and in such a spirit, must produce greater dishonour, and ensure the destruction that it was intended to avert! When they were told that there was nothing in the treasury to defray the costs

* Parl. Hist. i. 166—16

that had been incurred in quelling Wat Tyler's insurrection, the coronation of the queen, who was now coming over, guarding the seas, keeping the fortresses, and the defence of the kingdom, they made answer, that, "considering the evil hearts and rancour of the people throughout the whole realm, they neither durst nor would grant any manner of talliage." After the recent experience which they had had of anarchy, this declaration would have been insane if they had been sincere in making it; but it seems to have been intended only as the means of obtaining a declaration of grace and pardon, concerning which the king said he would advise farther till they should have done what belonged to them. They then, considering the great charge of the king, as well here as beyond sea, granted the subsidies, and the king ordered his declaration to be made.*

The people of Rye, however, and some other ports, who knew that their best security must be in their own strength and exertions, fitted out a squadron, put to sea, and brought home seven prizes, all richly laden with wine, wax, and other good merchandise, and with 300 men on board. One of the prizes had been "taken from the English aforetime, and was called the Falcon, belonging to the lord William Latimer."† These ships were called pirates, which may, however, have been used as a common appellation for regular enemies who carried on a sort of piratical war. But pirates were at this time so numerous, the same causes which produced the White Companies in France sending other ruffians of the same stamp to seek their fortunes upon the seas, that the Hanse towns‡ found it necessary, a few years later, to send out a fleet of twenty sail for the purpose of destroying them. The success of the Rye adventurers animated others. Portsmouth sent forth a squadron to attack four French ballengers, which intercepted the intercourse between England and Flanders, and also annoyed the trade with Gascony: they fell in

* Parl. Hist. i. 174, 175. † Holinshed, ii. 754.

‡ Jacobus à Mellen, Hist. Lubecensis, ab anno 1300 and 1400, c. 2. § 21.

with them, "fought a sore and cruel battle, and in the end slew all the enemies, nine only excepted, and took all their vessels." "Another fleet of Englishmen took eight French ships, which had aboard 1500 tons of good wines, that comforted the Englishmen greatly."* At this time the king of France, Charles VI., had collected so large a fleet as to excite suspicion of his designs. "A strong navy" was sent to sea under the lord St. John and sir Thomas Percy, who gained little honour by their cruise; "for," the chronicler says, "they did no good; suffering the French fleet divers times to pass by them, and not once offering to set upon them. But the ships of Portsmouth and Dartmouth bestirred themselves better; for, entering the river Seine, they drowned four of the enemy's ships, and took other four, with a bark of the lord Clisson's, one of the fairest that was to be found either in France or England. In these vessels the Englishmen had a rich prize of wines and other merchandises."†

A.D. 1384.

When Richard succeeded to the throne, France counted upon the naval aid of Portugal as well as of Castille; king Fernando of Portugal having engaged himself ‡, by treaty, to furnish five galleys toward the succour with which Castille had promised yearly to assist the French. Upon the death of Fernando a change in the order of succession took place; and, among many most important consequences, led to those friendly relations between Portugal and England, which, with little interruption, have subsisted from that time till the present. As soon as the Portugueze, after the most heroic struggle in their eventful history, had succeeded in expelling their Castillian invaders, they sent six galleys to the king of England, "to aid him against his adversaries:" .. "the which," says the chronicler §, "were well received and highly made of by the Londoners and others; so that the Portingales had no cause to repent of their coming hither." England had a nearer ally in

* Holinshed, ii. 762. † Ibid. 765.
‡ Ayala, Cronica del Rey Don Enrique II. an. viii. c. 6.
§ Holinshed, i. 707.

Flanders, where, after the fatal battle of Roosebeke, and the death of the younger and greater Arteveld, the popular party had recovered sufficient strength to maintain a resolute war against the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold, to whom that province had fallen upon the death of count Louis de Male. Philip was powerfully assisted by his nephew the king of France; and no war was ever carried on with circumstances of more atrocious cruelty*, .. those on the duke's part setting an example which the commons were not slow in retaliating. The French king, Charles VI., thought to prevent the English from taking any further part in these troubles, by pursuing the old policy of stirring up hostilities on the side of Scotland. With this object he sent the admiral Jean de Vienne to that country, with considerable supplies of men and money: the Scotch, thus encouraged and aided, crossed the border, and began to rob and spoil; for which severe vengeance was speedily taken by the king himself, at the head of an army. The result was, that when, after many cruelties and great mischief, both armies had retired into their respective countries, the Scotch, imputing their losses to the ill conduct or ill counsel of their French allies, despoiled them of their goods, and sent them away.† The English were

A.D. 1385.

* "Fue, si la huvo jamas en Flandes, atroz y sangrienta la guerra." — *Sueyro*, ii. 7.

† Holinshed, ii. 767. Sueyro, ii. 6. The story, as Froissart relates it, is an edifying one: — "When the admiral and his company were returned into Scotland, and were come to Edinburgh, they had endured great pain, and they could find nothing to buy for their money: wine they had but little, and but small ale or beer; and their bread was of barley or of oats, and their horses were dead for hunger, and foundered for poverty; and when they would have sold them, they wist not to whom, nor there was none would give them one penny neither for horse nor for harness. The soldiers showed to their captains how they were dealt withal, and they knew it right well by experience of themselves... The admiral, .. he saw well the evils of the Scots, and considered the peril of his people; then he gave leave to depart all such as would; but at their departing was the mischief, for the lords could find no passage for themselves nor for their men The Scots would that such knights and squires as were but poor, should depart, to the intent that they might rule the remnant at more ease; and they said to the admiral, 'Sir, let your men depart when they will; but as for yourself, ye shall not depart out of this country till we be full satisfied of all such charges as we have borne this season for your army.' And when the admiral saw that it would be none otherwise, he considered well how he was without comfort, and closed in with the sea, and saw how the Scots were of a wild opinion; wherefore he was fain to agree to the Scots intent,

thus enabled to direct their attention towards Flanders; and, invading the Isle of Cadsant, which held the duke's part, they laid it waste with fire and sword. A fleet of Easterlings, with some ships of Holland and Zeeland, coming from the north, being, by stress of weather, driven to that coast, and ready, as all ships seem in those times to have been, for any adventure that promised profit or plunder, joined them; so that, with their allies from Ghent, above 100 sail were collected. Sluys was then garrisoned for the duke by the French: they took one of the Easterling ships, and put to death the whole crew, . . in return for which all the French on board were, in like manner, slain when the English recaptured the vessel. The fleet now separated; the English making for the French coast to make prize of ships which they heard were loading at Abbeville and St. Valery; the Gantese, with thirty sail, to make an attempt upon Antwerp. They failed in it, and with considerable loss; and, by orders of Guy de Tremouille, who seems to have been the French commandant there, the eyes of some of the prisoners were put out; for which, cruelty as usual provoking cruelty, such French as happened to be prisoners in Ghent were put to death.

The English, after having succeeded fully in their expedition, returned to the Flemish coast; and, having landed their succours at Sas de Gant, the Gantese, with their aid, laid siege to Biervliet by sea and land. A force of Hollanders and Hainaulters compelled them to retire. On their retreat they burnt Hugevliet, Isendyck,

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and caused a cry to be made, that all manner of persons should come to the admiral of France, and prove that any of his men had done them any damage, and he would recompense them to the value thereof; which cry appeased the Scots, and so the admiral became debtor to them all, and said how he would not depart out of Scotland till all the complainants were fully satisfied and paid. Then divers knights and esquires had passage and so returned, some into Flanders, and as wind and weather would drive them, without horse and harness, right poor and feeble, . . cursing the day that ever they came in Scotland, . . wishing that the French king had peace with England one year or two, and so both kings together to go into Scotland, utterly to destroy that realm for ever; for they said they never saw so evil people, nor so false traitors, nor more foolish people in feats of war." B. iii. c. 16.

Oostburgh, and wasted with fire and sword most of the eastern part of that fertile district called the Vrye, and did still greater hurt by breaking down the dykes.* Frans Ackerman, one of the ablest demagogues of that age, but also one of the most moderate and least cruel, commanded the forces of Ghent: he had recently failed in an attempt upon Aardenburg, where he hoped to have taken the lord of Merlemont, Hans Van Jumont, a monster, who used either to put out the eyes or cut off the ears and noses of all the Gantese that fell into his hands, and whose name was, for many generations, deservedly execrated in those countries.† Ackerman had promised the people of Ghent not to return till he had taken some town; and, having failed there, he turned his thoughts towards a place of more importance. He learnt from his espials that Roger Van Ghistelles, the governor of Damme, was gone from thence to Bruges: he approached Damme that same night, succeeded in passing the ditch, and setting up his scaling ladders unperceived. Some of his people, who had to recover their reputation, were the first to enter: they opened the gates. The garrison was not strong: they who resisted were slain; but no others were injured: and to this then rare instance of humanity Ackerman added an example of courtesy such as was more likely to have been learnt in the camp of the Black Prince than in the war of the White Hoods. Seven of the principal ladies of the country had come thither to be with the wife of Roger Van Ghistelles, who was about to lie down in child-bed: Ackerman treated these ladies, not as captives, but as guests: he made a banquet for them, and assured them, with an oath, that no wrong should be offered them; for though he waged war with men, he knew how to respect the virtue and the modesty of women. This assurance was faithfully

* Sueyro (ii. 8.) ascribes this to the English; Sanderus (ii. 208.) to the Gantese, of whom he says a great part perished in the inundation which they thus occasioned.

† Sueyro, ii. 7.

kept; and he won thereby the respect, and even the good-will, of the party to which he was opposed.*

He lost no time in demanding succours from Ghent, to keep a place, for the recovery of which, as being the port of Bruges, he knew that the utmost exertions would be made. The bayley of Ghent was immediately sent thither with some chosen men and a body of English archers. The duke of Burgundy might have found the reconquest an achievement beyond his strength, defended as the place was likely to be by such men, and being within reach of English aid: but he had great influence over the counsels of the young king of France, who was, just at this time, in Amiens, celebrating his marriage. There the news reached him; and a representation from the duke, that the Gantese, if they got possession of Sluys also, might probably put the English in possession of it for the sake of ruining the trade of Bruges, induced him to declare that he would never see Paris again till he had laid siege to Damme. His orders were forthwith sent through all the land: "men of war came to him from all parts:" the place had been taken on the 17th of July, and on the 1st of August he was before it with an army of 80,000 men, and these, ere long, were joined by 20,000 Flemings. "So they laid a goodly siege about Damme; and the king lay so near to it, that the gunshot past over his head,".. for at this siege cannon certainly were used. Frans Ackerman "bore himself valiantly," in a manner answerable to his reputation: every day there was either skirmish or assault, unless it were a truce. The Bruges men drained the foss; their post was on the north of the town. The French blocked up the canal, so that no succours could reach the besieged from the sea, and they broke the water-courses, by which the place was supplied

* Sueyro, ii. 8. Froissart, ii. 163. "The cellars here," he says, "were full of malvoisie et de garnacher," which last word lord Herners renders "wine Granade." This we are sure must be wrong. Roquefort says it was a foreign white wine, and states the duty, which, at the commencement of the fourteenth century, it paid in France, where it was also known by the names of Galrigache and Galvache: from the latter name it may be conjectured that it was a Spanish wine from Gelves.

with fresh water from Male, so that the townsmen had none to drink but what was either stagnant or brackish. The heat of the weather rendered this worse; and from this cause the besieged suffered greatly, and from the fatigue which they endured in repairing by night the damage done to the walls by the French artillery by day.*

Guillaume, the heir of Hainault, served at this siege, and was knighted by the king of France, before one of the assaults. "That day," says Froissart, "he reared up his banner, and quitted himself like a good knight: but at that assault the Frenchmen lost more than they won, for the archers of England, who were with Frans Ackerman, greatly grieved the assailants: and also he had great plenty of artillery, for when the town was won it was well furnished, and he had caused much to be brought from Ghent, when he knew that siege would be laid to it."† He looked for aid from England; and if there had been that vigour in the government which always excites a correspondent spirit in the nation, aid would not have been withheld on so momentous an occasion. Almost every day there was an assault, and skirmishing at the gates and barriers. "The Frenchmen could not well come to the walls, because the ditches were full of mire; for if it had been rainy weather, the host should have had much ado, and should have been fain to have dislodged, whether they would or not; but for the space of a month that the siege endured it never rained, and they had victual enough. Howbeit, because of the evil air, and the stinking of dead beasts and horses, the air was so corrupt, that divers knights and squires were thereby sore sick, so that divers went to refresh them at Bruges, and other

* Froissart, ii. 168. Sueyro, ii. 9.

† "Surely," says Froissart, "the king of England's uncles had come over the sea sufficiently garnished with men of war and artillery to raise the siege, but that they were let because of the admiral's being in Scotland; .. and also it was said that the constable of France should come into Scotland with a great power for to make war into England, whereby the Gantese were not rescued; wherefore it behoved them within the town of Damme to make an evil bargain." ii. 166.

places, to forsake the evil air. The king himself went and lay at Marles; howbeit his tents were still pight up in the field."*

Ackerman still thought to hold out, till succours from England should come and raise the siege. But, instead of an English armament, there lay a French fleet in the harbour of Sluys, laden with provisions for the enemy. He had, however, another and nearer hope. There were few places in Flanders which were not divided by factions: some of the principal persons in Sluys were of the popular party; they were in correspondence with Ghent, and had engaged to set fire to the ships, and, on the same night, to cut the dykes, which would have inundated the greater part of the French camp; but the design was discovered, and all the persons concerned in it were immediately put to death. Ackerman then lost all hope: his artillery also began to fail; and, "lest the townsmen," he said, "should make a shrewd merchandise, and deliver him and his men to the enemy," he placed the women and helpless people in the churches, under pretext that an assault was expected on the morrow; then, sallying as if to beat up the enemy's quarters in the night, he and his people effected their escape to Ghent. When the men of Damme knew that they were forsaken, they that could fled out of the town; and, in the pursuit that presently followed, some 500 of them were slaughtered. Meantime the town was entered without opposition. The French thought to have taken great riches there: .. "they found nothing but poor people, men, women, and children, and great plenty of good wine; and so, for despite and displeasure, they set fire to the town, so that it was well nigh all burnt. The king and the duke of Burgundy were sore displeased, but they could not amend it; howbeit, with much pain, the ladies and gentlemen were saved from hurt." The French then turned their vengeance upon the tract of country called the Vier Ambachten, or four bailiwicks, and laid it

* Froissart, ii. 165.

waste, putting to death, with execrable torments, those who fell into their hands, and destroying every thing that could be destroyed.*

The French fleet suffered greatly when it departed from Sluys. Eleven sail were wrecked on the coast near Calais; and 500 men, who escaped from the wreck, were made prisoners. The ships from Calais encountered seventy-two of the enemy's navy; and "behaved themselves so manfully," that they took eighteen of them, "besides a great bark, in which threescore armed men were slain before it could be taken." Three days afterwards, they attacked a detachment of forty-five others, and "after a six hours' fight obtained the victory, taking three of the most powerful vessels; whereof one, being a hulk of Eastland, had been hired by the Normans to guard the residue. The other two were of such mould, that they could not enter into the haven at Calais; and, therefore, were sent to Sandwich. One of these was a new ship, which the constable Olivier de Clisson, the butcher, had bought at Sluys; and which was so tall, big, and large a vessel, that it is said to have been valued at 20,000 florins."† The French suffered also great loss by shipwreck. But their admiral, Jean de Vienne, had returned from Scotland, with a poor opinion both of his Scotch friends and his English enemies; and he encouraged the young king, then flushed with his success at Damme, to think of invading and conquering England. "He had rather," he said, "be count of Savoy, or of Artois, than king of Scots; and for England, he had seen its whole force brought into the field, which he estimated at 60,000 archers and 6000 or 7000 men-at-arms; the Scotch had assured him, that was all the power of England,

* After speaking of the atrocious cruelties which they inflicted upon men and women, "entre los incendios y ruinas de sus casas," Sueyro adds, "los templos y otros edificios, los arboles y frutos sintieron, si se halla sentimiento en plantas y piedras, la violencia conque lo dexaron como desierto todo, hasta las puertas de Gante."

† Holinshed, who states this on Knighton's authority, says that the constable gave 3000 francs for it: if there be a zero too much in the one statement, or too little in the other, the difference might be intelligible.

and that there was 'none abiding behind.'" The king and his council replied, that such a force was a great thing; and Olivier de Clisson observed, "they might well be as many as that; but yet," he added, "I would rather fight with them at home in their own marches, than with half the number here; and so I heard my master say oftentimes when I was young." .. "By my faith," quoth the admiral, "if you had been there with a great number of men, as I supposed you would have been, I think we had famished all Scotland!" The discourse ended in possessing the duke of Burgundy with a strong desire of invading England; and a determination of moving the French king to such an attempt.* He had little difficulty in this; "for," says Holinshed, "the Frenchmen never showed more vanity than they did this year, since the lineage of the Capets began first to rule in France."

The way was prepared for this by making terms with Ackerman and the other heads of the popular party, thus terminating one of the most destructive wars in the middle ages; "which, during the last seven years of its continuance, had cost the lives of more than 200,000 men." The duke's next object was to obstruct that easy communication between Ghent and England, from which this formidable party might otherwise, upon any future occasion, have again derived confidence and support; and this could only be done by fortifying Sluys. The place belonged not to the duke but to his kinsman Guillaume, eldest son of the count of Namur; who, upon the first proposal of an exchange, was marvellously displeased; "for the town of Sluys," says Froissart, "with the appendants and profits of the sea, was a fair and profitable heritage, and it was fallen to him by his ancestors, wherefore he loved it the better:" however, he was so sore desired by the duke, and his council, that there was no remedy, and he was fain to exchange† it for the lands of Bethune, "which is a

* Froissart, iii. 17.
† P. Daniel, with that cool reliance which certain historians place upon

fair and a great heritage." The duke immediately began to erect a fortress there, which he called the castle of Burgundy; his intention being "to subdue all comers and goers, entering into the haven of Sluys, and to keep it with men of war; so that none should enter by the sea into those marches without their danger:" and to make a tower so high "as to command sight of the sea for twenty leagues' distance."* For its further security, the king of France also, at the duke's suggestion, erected another castle, to be garrisoned by Frenchmen; not that it was the duke's intention to give the French this hold upon Flanders: his policy was to inflict what injury he could upon England by an invasion, as a sure means of confirming his own authority at home; and, at the same time, to engage France in designs which might give her full employment, on which he depended more for his own safety than on consanguinity or treaties.

Among the persons whose advice had most weight in determining the king to so great an undertaking as the invasion of England, were the admiral and Clisson the butcher. In the former it was the project of a brave and enterprising enemy; and the latter was not a man to feel that, by the asylum which he had found in England after his father had been put to death, and by the education which he had then received there, he had contracted a moral relationship towards that country, which made it a sin for him to bear arms against it, in any other cause than in defence of his native land. The count de St. Pol, also, heartily encouraged the design, though he had married a sister of the English king. But the duke was the chief mover in this weighty business. In addition to the obvious incitements of taking vengeance for so many calamities as the English had brought upon France, and of showing the superiority

the ignorance or the indolence of their readers, asserts that Charles VI. made a present to the duke of Burgundy of this place; "le meilleur port que le France eût alors sur l'océan," as if it had ever belonged to France v. 332.

* Froissart, iii. 7. Sueyro, ii. 14.

of that kingdom in men and means, they urged the politic consideration that great part of the strength of England was at this time absent, engaged under John of Gaunt, in an expedition to Castille: England would, therefore, be taken, if not unprovided, yet without its best soldiers and its most experienced commanders: it was for the interest of France to effect this powerful diversion in favour of its ally, the king of Castille; and for her honour, also, thus to return the service which the Spaniards had rendered her in the destruction of the English fleet off Rochelle.* If farther encouragement were required, it was to be found in the dissension that prevailed among the king of England's counsellors, and in the evils which had been brought upon that country by the late popular rebellion. A young king, whose enterprises had hitherto always been successful, was easily persuaded by such representations; and "the lords, and the most part of the chivalry of France, said, why should not we for once go to England to see the country and the people, and to learn the way there, as they have learnt it in France?"

A.D. 1386. Accordingly, preparations were made upon the most extensive scale; and, while the public feeling was under the excitement of eager expectation and hope, "taxes and tallages, such as had not been imposed in France for 100 years before, were set and assized in the cities and good towns, and in the plain country: they that were rich were taxed and rated to the third and fourth part of their goods for the aid of this voyage; and many people paid more than they were worth beside to make up the payment for men of war." . . "All manner of ships that could do any service," says the contemporary chronicler, "were sent for to Holland, Zeeland, Middleburgh, Zierikzee†, Dordrecht, Schoenhoven, Leyden, Harlaam‡, Delft, the Brille, and all

* Sueyro, ii. 17.
† Zerechiel in the original, which, in the modern edition of lord Berners' translation, is conjectured to be Overyssel; but there can be no doubt that Zierikzee is meant.
‡ So I venture to write for Herpen.

other towns upon the sea coast, and upon the rivers entering into the sea; and all were brought to Sluys. From Spain, and the port of Seville, to Pruce (as Prussia was then called), there was no great ship on the sea that the French could lay their hands on, but was retained for the king of France and his people." But the Hollanders and the Zeelanders said to those who retained them, "If you would have our services you must pay us outright, or we will not go: so they were paid," says Froissart, "before they would leave their havens or their houses, and in this they were wise." . . "I trow," he continues, "that since God created the world, there were never seen so many great ships together as were that year at Sluys and at Blankenburg; for in the month of September there were numbered 1287 ships at Sluys: their masts seemed, in the sea, like a great wood." The report in France was, that vessels enough for bridging* the channel were assembled. At Sluys it was the king's intention to take sea, and so to enter into England, and destroy that country. And till the month of September they did nothing else but grind corn and bake biscuit on the sea-coast, and at Tournay, Lisle, Douay, Arras, Amiens, Bethune, St. Omers, and in all the towns about Sluys. No other such great enterprise was projected against England from the time of the Norman conquest until that of the Spanish armada; and the full and lively account of the stir of preparation cannot, even at this day, be perused without interest. "It was a wonder," says Froissart, "to consider from whence all such provision came, what by land and sea, into Flanders. Whoso had been that season at Bruges, at Damme, or at Sluys, and seen the business there in charging of ships with hay, sacking of biscuit, and lading in of onions, peas, beans, barley, candles, hose, shoes, spurs, knives, daggers, battle-axes, axes to hew withal, mattocks, nails, beds, couches, horseshoes, pots, pans, candlesticks, and all manner of necessaries for kitchen, buttery, and all other offices

* Juvenal des Ursins, quoted by P. Daniel.

and of every thing that could be thought of, necessary to serve man and horse, for all was had into ships in one thing or another; .·. whosoever had seen it, if he had been sick, I think he would clean have forgotten all pain. The companions of France reckoned none otherwise among themselves, when they spake together, but that the realm of England should have been utterly lost without recovery; and all the men, women, and children therein slain, or taken, and carried into captivity in France."

But it was not the French, and their Flemish allies alone who exulted in such expectations. Men of prey . . for that designation ought not to be confined to beasts and birds . . were attracted from far and near. "Lords, knights, esquires, and men of war were invited to come and serve the king of France in this journey, out of Savoy, Germany, and from the going down of the sun to the land of the earl of Armagnac; and these lords, though they were of far countries, and knew not what end this war should come to, yet they came, and made their provisions so great and costly, that it was great marvel to think thereof." . . "Such preparation as was made was not had in remembrance of man, nor in writing; never none like seen," says the great chronicler, "nor heard of. Gold and silver was no more spared than though it had rained out of the clouds, or scummed out of the sea.* The great lords of France sent their servants to Sluys, to apparel and make ready their provisions and ships. . . The king himself, young as he was, had more will than any other to this journey, and that he always showed to the end thereof. Every man helped to make provision for other, and to garnish their ships, and to paint them with their arms. . . Painters had then a good season, for they had whatsoever they demanded, and yet there could not enough of them be got for money. They made banners, pennons, standards of silk, so goodly, that

* "Que s'il plust des nues, ou qu'on le puisast en la mer." Lord Berners has here a livelier expression than that in the original.

it was a marvel to behold them; also they painted the masts of their ships from the one end to the other, glittering with gold, and devices, and arms."* The paintings of the lord Guy de Tremouille's ship cost more than 2000 francs. Then comes the woeful truth, that "the poor people of the realm paid for all; for the tallages were then so great to furnish this voyage, that the richest sorrowed for it, and the poor fled for it." The force to be embarked here consisted of 60,000 men, of whom 20,000 were men-of-arms, 20,000 arbalisters, and 20,000 "other men of war." But preparations were carried on in the ports of Bretagne also, under the superintendence of the constable Olivier de Clisson; and there, either at his suggestion, or at the admiral's (for it is imputed to both), a portable intrenchment was made, upon a huge scale, for securing the troops immediately upon their landing. This, which was likened to the enclosure of a town, or wall of wood, is described as being of twenty feet in height, and containing in length, or in compass, when it was set up, 3000 paces; and at every twelve paces was a turret, large enough to receive ten men, and ten feet higher than the rest of the wall. The whole was so constructed that it might be taken in pieces, and moved with the army; and "a great number of carpenters and others were engaged in wages to attend thereon."† The materials for all this were in such abundance that, one writer says, it seemed as if whole woods had been brought together for it. The camp, in fact, was to have had the form, and regularity, and security of a town within this fortification, which comprised towers, bastions, and bulwarks, and other defences of that age.‡ And the enemy did

* "The French," says Sueyro, "vied with each other, as if they had been going to a certain victory, or to a wedding, in such wise did they adorn and gild their ships: pero toda esta fiesta se hazia sin tener cuenta con Dios, que se reia desde el cielo de las maquinas humanas."

† Holinshed, ii. 772. Froissart, iii. 49.

‡ Sueyro, ii. 17. P. Daniel departs widely from the contemporary writers in representing these wooden fortifications as a wooden town. He says, "On chargea un grand nombre de ces navires de quantité de bois de charpente, qu'il n'y avoit plus qu'à assembler, pour en faire des maisons, où l'on prétendoit loger des soldats après la descente, en attendant qu'on se fût

not seem to feel, when their means and their ingenuity were ostentatiously displayed in this remarkable device, that such anxious and costly preparations for defence, on the part of an invading army, were little in accord with that hopeful and adventurous spirit by which alone success could be obtained.

Had there been a prince like Edward III. upon the throne, or his peerless son, the flower of the Plantagenets, the French armament would have been attacked in the harbour, and a second battle of Sluys would have been recorded among our naval victories: but with a young and dissolute king, whose good qualities were corrupted by his station, and his evil ones inflamed by ill companions; . . with discontented nobles, some of whom, perhaps, had already conceived those treasonable designs which brought upon their country so many years of misery and civil war ; . . and, with a people oppressed by imposts, and who had neither confidence in their rulers, nor respect for their masters, "it was no marvel," says Froissart, "that this great apparel somewhat, at the beginning, abashed the Englishmen." There was, however, some doubt, notwithstanding the loud boast of the French, that they were about to take vengeance upon England for all former wars, whether these preparations were not intended against Calais ; "for the English well knew that, of all the towns in the world, this was the one which the French most desired to have. Great provision, therefore, was sent thither of grain, salt, flesh, fish, wine, beer, and other things," and several of the most experienced captains, with 500 men-of-arms and 500 archers ; and the earl of Arundel and sir Henry Spenser, were ordered to keep the sea with forty great ships, "well decked, and having on board 300 men-of-arms, and twice that number of archers. The king's uncles, earls of Cambridge and Buckingham, afterwards

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rendu maître de quelque bonne ville d'Angleterre ; et rien ne fût plu fameux alors que la ville de bois qu'on avoit fait à l'éclus, pour la transporter en Angleterre." (v. 331.) I know not whether more want of fidelity or of consideration, is shown in this passage.

dukes of York and Gloucester, would fain have recalled their brother John of Gaunt from his Castillian expedition to the defence of his own country; but his schemes of ambition were with him paramount to every other consideration, and they and the French were equally disappointed by his persevering in his expedition. Richard was then in the marches of Wales, with those favourites by whose advice he was governed. But when "the lords, and the prelates, and the people of the good towns and cities, and commons of the realm, were fully and credibly informed, how the French king was ready to come into England to destroy it," they then drew together to counsel; and the king was written to by his uncles, that he should come to London, for the people were "not content with him nor his advisers." He listened, on this occasion, to their representations, seeing that there was indeed a great and imminent danger. A council was held on his arrival, and the earl of Salisbury, who was "a right valiant and prudent knight," addressed them in a speech which was well received. "It is no wonder," he said, "if our enemy the French king intends to come against us; for since the death of the last king Edward of noble memory this kingdom hath been in great adventure to have been destroyed by the villains; and it is also well known in France how we be not all of one accord; and thence cometh the present trouble, which is not light: for he is but a fool that feareth not his enemy. As long as the kingdom of England was in unity, . . the king with his people, and they with him, . . we prospered, and reigned victoriously, and none was found to do us any great wrong. Wherefore it is now needful, and never before was so great need, that we bring ourselves again into love and unity, if we think to come to any honour. This kingdom hath been a long time in flower; and ye know that that which is in flower hath more need to be well kept than when it is turned to perfect fruit. For the last sixty years, the knights and squires who have gone forth from hence have been more honoured for all feats of arms than any others of any nation whatsoever.

Let us then take especial care that, as long as we live, we may keep this honour."

His words were addressed to willing ears: there was no want of spirit in the king or in the people. The first object was to guard the coast. Salisbury himself, "because part of his land bordered near upon the Isle of Wight, was set there with his men and the archers of that country. The earl of Devonshire was stationed at Southampton, with 200 men-of-arms and 600 archers, to keep the haven; the earl of Cambridge at Dover, with 500 men-of-arms and 1200 archers; the earl of Buckingham at Sandwich, with as many more; the earls of Stafford and Pembroke at Orwell haven, with the same number; sir Henry Percy at Yarmouth, with 600 archers and 300 men-of-arms. All the havens and ports, from the Humber to the Land's End, in Cornwall, were defended with men-of-arms and archers; and on the heights along the sea-coast, opposite Flanders and France, "watchmen and watchers," says Froissart, 'were set in diverse manners, I will tell you how:".. Gascony pipes, emptied of wine and filled with sand, were piled in columns one upon another; and on the top of these pipes were platforms, upon which men sat night and day, keeping watch and looking toward the sea. Their orders were, if they saw the French fleet approach, to light torches there, that beacon-fires might incontinently be kindled along all the heights, to raise the country. The intended plan of operations was, that the enemy should be allowed to land without opposition, and march into the country some three or four days' journey; that the English were then to gather towards the point where they had landed, and to attack and destroy the ships if they could, intercept their supplies, and then follow the French, .. not at once to give them battle, but to harass them and keep them waking, and prevent them from foraging, and cut off all that were abroad in the country, and thereby famish them."

The French admiral had strangely deceived himself concerning the military strength of England. Not-

withstanding the force which John of Gaunt had led abroad, there were, at this time, 10,000 men-of-arms, and ten times that number of archers, arrayed for the defence of the country. "And whereas taxes and tallages were great in France on the men of the towns, in like manner they were great that season in England, so that the realm sorrowed it a great season after; but now they were glad to pay the soldiers, to be by them defended: 'It is not against reason,' they said, 'that we are taxed now, to give of our goods to knights and squires, that they may defend their heritages and ours.'" At the instance of the Londoners, Rochester Bridge was broken. That religious feeling which induced Edward to require the prayers of his people when he led his armies into France was now manifested with more unquestionable fitness. Processions were made thrice a week in every good town and city, with great devotion of heart, and "with prayers and orisons to God, to deliver them from this peril. And yet," says Froissart, "there were 100,000 in England who heartily desired that the enemy might land: such light companions, in comforting themselves and them that were abashed, would say, 'Let these Frenchmen come! not a cullion of them shall return again to France!'" This was the language of those who were arrayed for the service of their country, .. of brave but not boastful men, who had heard from their fathers the noble deeds which, in their days, had been done at Cressy and at Poictiers. But the excellent chronicler* tells us also, that "such persons as were in debt, and had no thoughts or no means of payment, rejoiced at the intended invasion, and would say to their creditors who pressed them, 'Be easy: they are coining, in France, new florins, wherewith you shall be paid!' Upon the strength of this, they lived and spent largely, credit not being refused them; for if there were any demur, they used to say, 'What would you have? Is it not

* Excellent, Froissart may well be called. I should have called him *incomparable*, if I had not remembered some of the Spanish and Portuguese chroniclers: that epithet belongs to the Portuguese Fernam Lopez.

better that we should spend freely the goods of this land, than that they should be kept for the French to find and take them?' By such means," he says, "there was spent in outrage in England to the amount of 1000*l.* sterling"*. The great lords and the people of the good towns, who had much to lose, apprehended the danger, and "were in great doubt; but the commons and poor companions cared nothing, neither did poor knights and squires: they wished for the invasion, either to win or lose all. 'God,' they said, 'hath sent a fine time for us, since the king of France will come into this kingdom: there has not been such a king in France for these hundred years: he will make good soldiers of his people. Blessed may he be, since he will come to visit us; for we shall now either die or be rich: it cannot be otherwise.'"†

Meantime the preparations in Flanders were continued with unremitting activity during three months; "the apparel of ships, galleys, and vessels of every kind collected there for passing being so great and sumptuous that the oldest man then living never saw nor heard of the like." . . "Now let us go against these cursed Englishmen, who have done so many evils and persecutions to France," was the language of the French knights and squires‡, when they went to join the host: "now shall we be revenged for our fathers, brothers, and kinsmen, whom they have discomfited and slain!" In the middle of August, the king of France, to show his own eagerness for the expedition, and to hasten the movements of others, took leave of his queen, heard mass in the church of Nôtre Dame, and declared that it was his intention not to return to Paris till he had been in England: this all the cities and good towns in France well believed, and this, no doubt, he fully intended. The duke of Burgundy also took leave of his wife and children:

* Froissart, iii. 36., the sum is probably mistaken. † Ibid. 14.

‡ "Leur ardeur," says P. Daniel, "les mesures qu'on avoit prises, la consternation qui commençoit, à se répandre parmi les Anglois, tout promettoit un heureux succès de cette expédition, quelque dangereuse qu'elle parût."

they met at Arras. "Daily there came people from all parts in such great numbers, that the land was eaten up. Nothing was left abroad in the country, but it was taken without paying any thing: the poor people who had gathered in their corn had nothing left them but straw: their waters were fished, their houses pulled down for fire-wood; and, if they ventured to complain, they were beaten or killed. If the English had arrived there, they could not, nor would not, have made such destruction as the French themselves did. 'We have no money now,' they said; 'but we shall have enough when we return, and then you shall be paid in full.' But the people," says Froissart, "when they saw their goods thus taken, and that they dared say nothing aloud, cursed between their teeth, and said, 'Go to England, or to the Devil, and never return again!'" The expedition was so far well ordered, that care was taken not to encumber it with any inefficient persons. "It was the constable's intention that no man should enter England unless he were a chosen man-of-arms; and he enjoined the admiral not to let the ships be charged with varlets and boys, who would be of more damage than profit. This wise precaution was so rigorously observed, that, if two or three knights hired ships at their own cost, unless they were great lords, they were allowed but one additional horse and one varlet. The preparations, indeed, were so complete, and the arrangements in all respects such, that many were of opinion, and Froissart himself agreed with them, that if they could effect their landing, as they intended, in the Orwell, "they should sore abash the country." That they would effect a landing, indeed, no doubt was entertained in England, for there was no naval force to prevent it; and when the whole coast was threatened, it was impossible that any part could be guarded in sufficient strength against so powerful an armament. Sir Simon Burley, the governor of Dover Castle, thought that Dover and Sandwich were the likeliest points of attack; and he advised the monks of Canterbury to

deposit Becket's shrine in his castle, which was so strong a place, that he said it would be in safety there though all England were lost. The monks, however, whether owing to their trust in Becket, or their distrust of Burley, would not consent to be deprived of such a treasure: they took his advice in great despite: "If ye be afraid," they said, "make yourself sure; for though you shut yourself up within the castle of Dover for fear, yet the Frenchmen will not be so hardy as to come hither." Angry words ensued; and Burley, by his well-intended proposal, drew upon himself a degree of unpopularity which contributed to his destruction.*

A singular personage at this time took upon himself the office of mediator between the two countries: this was king Leon of Armenia, who had been driven from his kingdom by the Turks, and was then residing in France, where the king had assigned him a pension of 6000 francs. The mediation was voluntary, but not altogether disinterested. He set out from his residence at St. Audoin, near St. Denis, with only his own company, and no great apparel; took ship at Boulogne, and sailed for Dover, where he had good cheer, because he was a stranger; and so he came to the king's uncles there, who received him courteously, as they well knew how to do, and at convenient season asked of him whence he came, and whither he would. He replied, that in hope of good he was come thither to see the king of England and his council, and to treat for peace between France and England, the war between them being unmeet: by reason of its long endurance, the Turks had waxed proud, there being none to wage war against them, and by occasion hereof, said he, "I have lost my kingdom, and am not like to recover it, unless there were firm peace throughout Christendom.'" This, as a matter concerning all Christian people, he wished to represent to the king. He admitted that he had no commission from the French king, but had come on his own motion. They represented to him, that if he were conveyed to the royal

* Froissart, iii. 41.

council, according to his desire, and in the meantime the French should land, his person might be in great jeopardy. To this he made answer, that he had requested the French king not to depart from Sluys till he should have seen the king of England; "and I repute him," said he, "so noble and so well advised, that he will grant my desire, and not put to sea till I come to him;" he pressed them, therefore, either to forward him to London, or answer him themselves, if they had authority. Their instructions, they replied, were to keep and defend that passage and the adjacent frontier: farther authority they had none, and were not of the king's council; but to London they forwarded him, under a good escort, for fear of danger. The Londoners were fortifying the city when he arrived: he, however, in riding through, was well regarded, because he was a stranger, and had good cheer made him, and was brought before the king. Four days after the first interview (during which time Richard had communicated with his uncles to know their opinion), the Armenian king was sent for to the palace at Westminster, a seat beside the king was given him, and there, before the council, he declared his business. "All Christendom," he said, "was sore decayed and feeblished by occasion of the wars between England and France: the knights and squires of both countries were wholly engaged on one side or the other, who before were wont to adventure themselves against the misbelievers: for this cause, the empire of Constantinople had lost much, and was like to lose more, . . and he himself had lost his kingdom of Armenia; wherefore he desired, for God's sake, that some treaty of peace might be made between these realms." The archbishop of Canterbury was the person charged to answer him; and the answer evinced the wisdom and proper spirit of those who advised it. "Sir, king of Armenia," said the primate, "it is not the manner, nor hath it ever been, between two such enemies as the king of England and the king of France, that peace should be proposed to the king of England with an

armed hand, in his own country. We will tell you what may be done, if it please you. You may return to the French king, and cause him and all his puissance to return into their own countries; and when every man is at home again, then, if it please you, you may return hither, and we will willingly attend to your treaty." This was all the answer he could obtain; but he dined with the king that day, and had "as great honour as could be devised;" and Richard offered him great gifts of gold and silver, none of which he would take, "though he had need thereof," accepting only, for courtesy, a ring of the value of 100 francs.*

A parliament met at Westminster on the 1st of October, and the chancellor, Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, told the houses that the principal cause for which they had been called together at that time was to acquaint them with the resolution of the council, that the king should pass the seas in person, with a royal army, being moved thereunto by these four causes;.. that he might at less expense attack the enemy abroad, than wait to defend the country against them at home;.. that he might take off the reproach blazed abroad as how he durst not go over in person;.. that he might assert his right to the crown of France, and thereby acquire both renown and honour;.. and, lastly, because the French themselves were daily threatening an invasion. Richard's sincerity is not to be suspected in a resolution so conformable to the temper of a young king, and the spirit of a Plantagenet; that of his council may: it would have been sound policy to have sent a fleet against the enemy's ships at Sluys, if a fleet could have been provided; but to withdraw a royal army from the country when an invasion was, in fact, daily to be looked for, would have been to leave England at the mercy of the invaders. The commons seem to have regarded the communication in this light; and, instead of taking it into consideration, they proceeded

* Froissart, iii. 42.

to impeach the earl of Suffolk; upon which the king withdrew from parliament to Eltham, that he might not seem to countenance that measure. Both houses then addressed a message to him, requiring that the chancellor and the treasurer might be removed from their offices, which they occupied not to the advantage of him or his kingdom: he returned an imperious answer, commanding them not to make mention of any such thing for the future, but forthwith proceed to the business for which they were summoned. It has too often been seen, in the troubled times of history, that peers and princes have been active in exasperating differences, which, if they duly understood their own interest as well as their duty, they would diligently endeavour to compose. The king's uncle, Gloucester, and the bishop of Ely, were now deputed to deliver the sense of both houses to him; and the duke's character renders it certain that he was nothing loth to be so deputed. With most humble submission, and wishes that he might be successful in the course of honour, and invincible against his enemies, and united to his subjects by the most firm bands of peace and hearty love, as well as for his own advantage and the salvation of his soul as for the unspeakable comfort of the people whom he governed, . . they intimated, on behalf of that people, how one old statute and laudable custom was approved, which no man could deny, that the king, once in the year, might lawfully summon his high court of parliament, and call the lords and commons thereunto, as to the highest court of his realm, in which court all right and equity ought to shine, as the noonday sun, whereof poor and rich may take refreshing. There, also, reformation ought to be had of all oppressions, wrongs, extortions, and enormities within the realm, and there the king ought to take counsel with the wise men of his realm for the maintenance of his estate, and conservation of the same; and if it might be known that any person within the realm or without intended the contrary, there also must be devised how such evil weeds may be destroyed.

There, also, must be studied and foreseen, if any charge do come upon the king and realm, how it may be honourably borne and discharged. Further, they declared that his subjects had lovingly demeaned themselves, in aiding him with their substance to the best of their power, and that their desire was to understand how those supplies were spent. And, farther, they had this to declare, how by an old ordinance it was enacted, that if the king, not being sick, should absent himself forty days, and refuse to come to the parliament, without regard to the charges of his people, and their great pains, then they may lawfully return home to their houses; wherefore, seeing he had been absent a long time, and still refused to come among them, it was greatly to their discomfort.

It is related that Richard made this reply: . . "Now we do plainly perceive that our people and the commons go about to rise against us; and in such case nothing seems better for us than to ask aid of our cousin the king of France, and rather submit ourselves to him than to our own subjects." With Richard's clear knowledge of the character of his uncles, and his reasonable suspicion of their designs, and with the horrors of a popular rebellion fresh in remembrance, it is very probable that such a thought passed across his mind, but most unlikely that he should have given it utterance; and as among the accusations which afterwards were heaped upon him this was never laid to his charge, we may fairly regard it as disproved.* The lords, however, are said to have replied, that this would be no wise course, for the French king was his old enemy, who, if he might once set foot in England, would rather despoil him of his kingdom than lend a helping hand to support him. They proceeded to speak of the great burden which had been laid upon the necks of the people for the support-

* This is Hume's opinion, who, upon the same ground, discredits a declaration imputed to Richard, that he would not, at the instance of parliament, remove the meanest scullion in his kitchen. Both rest upon Knyghton's authority; and I agree with Hume in thinking it plain that they were either intended by him merely as an ornament to his history, or are false. Vol. iii. 8vo. edit. note B.

ation of the wars: by reason whereof they were brought so low that they could not pay their rents, and by such means was his power decayed, his lords brought behind hand, and all his people sore impoverished. And as that king cannot be poor that hath rich people, so cannot he be rich that hath poor commons; and as he took hurt by such inconveniences chancing through evil counsellors, so the lords sustained no less, and each one after his estate and calling. And if remedy were not in time provided, the realm must fall to ruin, and the cause would be imputed to him and to his evil counsellors. This remedy consisted in their setting-to their helping hands. They are said to have proceeded thus: . . "There is yet one part more of our message remaining, to be delivered on the part of your people, and it is this: we have an ancient constitution, and it was not many ages since experimented (it grieves us that we must mention it), that if the king, through any evil counsel, or weak obstinacy, or contempt of his people, or out of a perverse and froward wilfulness, or by any other irregular courses, shall estrange himself from his people, and refuse to govern by the laws and statutes of the realm, . . but will throw himself headlong into wild designs, and stubbornly exercise his own single arbitrary will, that from that time it shall be lawful for his people, by their full and free consent, to depose that king from his throne, and establish upon the same some other of the royal race in his stead." In fact, a member had been encouraged to call for the record containing the parliamentary deposition of Edward II. Richard submitted now, because he was unable to resist: he only obtained a respite for his other ministers, by stipulating that they should content themselves with carrying through their impeachment against Suffolk; and on that condition he returned to the parliament.*

Unsuccessful as the king of Armenia's mediation had proved, there had been nothing in his reception to mor-

* Holinshed, ii. 775. Hume, iii. 15. Parl. Hist. i. 186, 187.

tify him; he had received all the respect and attention due to his good meaning and to his rank. But when he arrived at Sluys, "the French king and his uncles took no regard to his saying, but sent him back again into France; for their full intention was to invade England as soon as they might have wind and weather." There was, however, something more than wind and weather to be waited for. The king was now at Sluys; and every day's report throughout Flanders and Artois was, that the expedition would sail on the morrow, or on the next day after; but one of Charles's uncles, the duke of Berry, was not yet arrived: he moved "but fair and softly, for he had no great appetite for the adventure; and his long tarrying was displeasant to the king, and the duke of Burgundy, and the other great lords: they would gladly he had been come." They who were not great lords had far more cause to be impatient at his delay: the great were duly paid their appointments; but other poor companions, says Froissart's translator, "bought the bargain." The treasurer of the war, and the clerks of the chamber of accounts, said to them, "Wait till the next week, sirs, and then ye shall be paid;" and they had the same answer when the next week came; "and if any payment were made them, it was but for eight days, when as many weeks were due." Men began to suspect that the expedition would altogether fail, or perhaps had never been sincerely intended; but that when the taxes, which had been imposed upon this pretext, were collected, some excuse would then be found for breaking it up. The suspicion, as it affected the king and his advisers, was injurious; their hearts were set upon the enterprise and their honour pledged to it: but every day rendered the expectation more reasonable; and the chronicler says, that they were wise who cast such doubts, and provided for themselves accordingly. But the poor knights and companions that were retained by the great lords spent all they had: "every thing was so dear, that hard it was to get either bread or drink;" and if they would sell their pay or their

armour, none would purchase, unless they took them at their own iniquitous tender; whereas for all that they had to buy exorbitant prices were required. When the lords, who lodged at Bruges, sent to the king to ask when they should depart, the answer always was, within three or four days, or when the duke of Berry is come, and the wind may serve." So ever the time past, and the days shortened, and the nights grew long, and the weather began to be foul and cold. "The duke of Berry, meantime, had heard mass at Nôtre Dame, preparatory to his solemn departure from Paris, and had declared, like the king his nephew, that he would never enter that capital again till he had been in England. He set out for Flanders; and all the way as he came he had letters from the king and from the duke of Burgundy to hasten him, certifying him that they tarried for nothing but his coming. So he rode always forward; but it was by small journies."

The constable, meantime, sailed from Treguier to join the armament with a fleet of seventy-two ships; the wind became "fierce and great:" when they were off the mouth of the Thames the fleet was dispersed; and the English cruisers were upon the alert to profit by every opportunity of fortune. Seven of his vessels, having the provision on board, were driven to Zeeland, and there captured. The lord William of Beauchamp, captain of Calais, made two prizes, one of which was laden with "divers great guns and engines to beat down walls withal;" and there was on board a great quantity of powder "that was more worth than all the rest." The other was laden with a part of the great enclosure or wooden wall; and in her the master carpenter of that extraordinary work was taken, being an Englishman who had been banished his country for some offence. Three other ships, likewise, fell into their hands, carrying parts of the same enclosure. These, because of their lading, were brought to London, "whereof the king had great joy, and so had all the Londoners;" and when their curiosity had been satisfied, as there was enough

of this turretted palisade to be rendered useful, it was sent to be set up round the town of Winchelsea.*

The constable thought himself fortunate in reaching Sluys with the remainder of his fleet. Upon his arrival the king was earnest with him, that they should speedily set forth, saying, "the duke of Berry would arrive in one or two days." But the constable replied, "We cannot depart, sir, till the wind serves; for it is so sore against us, and so 'strainable,' that the sailors say it has not been so unfavourable for a great while as now." .. "Constable," said the king, "I have been in my ship, and the air of the sea pleaseth me greatly: I believe I shall be a good sailor, for the sea did me no hurt." .. "In God's name, sir!" the constable replied, "it hath done hurt to me; for we were in great peril by fortune of the sea and of the winds that rose against us off the English coast; and we have lost of our ships, whereof I am right sorry, if that might amend it; but it is without remedy for this time." The wind came round before the duke of Berry arrived: his delay had now exhausted the king's patience; and it was deemed better that he should be left to follow them, than that the execution of this mighty enterprise should be deferred longer. Accordingly, on the even of All Saints, the fleet weighed anchor, and launched from the haven of Sluys; but they had not proceeded above twenty miles upon their course before it veered again to its old point, and drove them back with such force, that several of them were disabled before they came again to anchor.†

Thus "always the time past, and the winter approached, and the lords lay there in great cold and peril." And yet they were not so eager to be gone as the Flemings were desirous to be relieved from the burden of such sojourners. The people of the country asked, in language more characteristic than reverent or complimentary, "why the French king tarried there so long, instead of crossing over to England; and if they

* Holinshed, ii. 773. 777. Froissart, iii. 42.
† Froissart, iii. 43. Holinshed, 777.

were not poor enough already that the French must make them poorer?".. "They will not cross this year," said they, "for the realm of England is not so easily to be won. What would they do in England? Englishmen are not of the condition of Frenchmen. When the English were in France and over-rode their country, they hid themselves in their fortresses, and fled before them as the lark before the hawk!" There was great danger that this temper might show itself in something more than murmurs; for the remembrance of the battle of Roosebeke was rankling in the minds of the common people, whose fathers, brethren, and friends had there been slaughtered. A quarrel began at Bruges, through the insolence of some of the French lackeys; and if the lord of Ghistelles had not happened to be there, and exerted himself with the help of the better citizens in time, it is said that not a lord, knight, nor squire of France in that city, where so many of them were lodged, would have escaped unslain; so bitter was the resentment of that yet recent wrong, and the indignation which the French had excited by their conduct towards the women. Ghistelles, by his exertions and his persuasions, for he spoke to the people in their own tongue, not only saved a great part of the French from being massacred that day, but that beautiful city also from the destruction with which such an out-burst of popular feeling would have been revenged.*

At length the duke of Berry arrived, having purposely protracted the time, that, by the excuse of winter †, he might cause the expedition to be put off. "Ah, fair uncle," said the king, "how greatly have I desired to see you! Why have you tarried so long? We had been now in England, and should have fought with our enemies if ye had been come.".. "The duke," says Froissart, "began to smile, and to excuse him-

* Sueyro, ii. 18. Froissart, iii. 43.

† "Wherein," says Holinshed, "he showed more wit than all the counsellors which the French king had about him; for if he had not politicly shifted off the matter, the king had landed here in England, to the great danger of his person, and loss of his people."

self, and did not show at once what lay in his heart. November being far advanced, he trusted that the weather would aid his advice, and waited only a favourable opportunity for giving it." Every day, it was said, that the fleet would sail on the morrow, and when the morrow came, the wind still continued as contrary as this duke wished it. Many of the ships were ready to weigh anchor upon the first signal, and not a few of the chief persons had embarked, emulous who should be the first to land in the enemy's country; but when the duke had been a week at Sluys, and December had begun, and even the most adventurous could not but acknowledge that "it was no good season for so many noble men to take the sea," the king's council assembled to deliberate whether they should proceed with the expedition, .. the very object of their meeting disclosing a desire that it might be given up. "The duke of Berry, then," says Froissart, "brake all, and showed so many reasonable reasons *," that they who had most eagerness to go were all put out of heart. He said it was a folly, and a great wrong to council the French king, who was yet but a youth, to put to sea at such a time of year, and to make war upon people in a country where no one knew the ways, and which was a poor country, and a full evil one to make war in. "Suppose that we were all arrived there, and had landed, they would not fight with us till they listed; and we should not dare leave our provision behind us, for if we did, it would all be lost. They who would make such a voyage, and to such a country (for the way from France to England is not so long), ought not to begin it in the heart of winter, but in the heart of summer. Call together all the mariners that are here, and they will tell you that my words are good; and that great as our power is now, though we have at present 1500 vessels assembled, there would not be 300 in company when we arrived there: behold, then, the peril we should put ourselves in! I say this by way of

* "Tant de raisons raisonnables."

counsel, and not that I would excuse myself from the enterprise; and since the greater part of the kingdom of France inclines in this to my way of thinking, I would that you and I should go, fair brother of Burgundy, but I would not have the king go; for if any ill should befall him it would be laid to us."*

The young king, who was present, listened to this with no good pleasure; and when his uncle had ceased, he replied, "In God's name! if none else go, I will." Upon which the lords began to smile, and say, "the king is of a brave will!" They agreed, however, to defer the expedition till April or May†; and that such stores as were not perishable should be reserved till that time. Accordingly, orders were given that every man should return to his home, and there be ready at the king's commandment early in the spring. "Then might have been seen lords and knights sore displeased, especially such as came from distant parts, and had travailed their bodies, and spent their money in trust to have had a good season." The counts of Savoy and Armagnac, and the dauphin of Auvergne, and many other great lords, departed in ill will, because they had not been in England. This dauphin told Froissart that the provision for the expedition which he left at Sluys, and all of which he lost, had cost him 10,000 franks; he did not consider how likely it was, .. how all but certain, .. that if he had landed on the desired shore, such an allotment of English ground as Harold Hardrada's would have been his portion there.! So the army broke

* Froissart, iii. 44.

† "Este golpe del cielo," says Suevro, "el invierno, y el temor dieron por buenas sus razones; assi se dissipò la empresa, haviendo sufrido el pueblo los daños en lugar del enemigo." P. Daniel most unjustly imputes the duke's conduct to jealousy. He says, "Le Duc de Berri n'avoit point été d'avis de cette entreprise; mais on avoit eu peu d'égard à son sentiment, et après qu'elle eut été resolue, on ne l'avoit consulté que par cérémonie. Il en fût offensé, et dit à quelques-uns de ses confidens, qu'il trouveroit bien les moiens de la faire échouer. Il en vent à bout — par l'entêtement d'un seul homme, et peût-être par son avarice (car le bruit courut alors qu'il avoit reçu de grandes sommes du Roi d'Angleterre), tous ces grands préparatifs, et les dépenses infinies qu'on avoit faites, ne servirent qu'à rendre la France ridicule, quand tous ces projets, qui avoient tenu toute l'Europe dans l'attente d'un grand évènement s'en furent allés en fumée." v. 331, 332. De Serres omits all mention of this armament.

up, some with light hearts and some with angry ones. The officers remained behind to dispose of what stores they could for their masters' profit, though they knew not to whom; and well were they if they could obtain ten franks for what had cost an hundred: very many lost every thing which they could not carry with them. Such was the pitiful result of an armament which cost the kingdom of France, in Froissart's words, 100,000 franks thirty times told. When this was known in England, some were "right joyful and glad thereof, thinking they had escaped a great peril; and others were angry and displeased therewith, which were such as thought to have had some promotion and profit by the enemies' coming; and divers of them said that they would never set by the Frenchmen more."* Men whose fathers had fought at Cressy and at Poictiers might rightly feel this confidence whenever they met the French in battle; but they ought to have remembered now, that their own courage had not, in this instance been the means of their deliverance, neither had the wisdom of their rulers contributed to it; but that it was over-ruling Providence alone which had abated the pride of the enemy, and confounded their devices. At the very time when the danger appeared most imminent and inevitable, parliament, or, more truly, the great nobles by whom it was directed, were making terms with the king; nor did they grant the supplies which were necessary for the defence of the country, till by an act preluded with the lying assertion that it was framed for the reverence of God, to nourish peace, unity, and good accord within the realm, and specially for the common profit and ease of the people, and which the king was compelled to acknowledge as of his own free will, and to swear to,.. they had transferred the sovereign power from him to a council of fourteen, who were all of his uncle Gloucester's faction. "O dear country!" says Speed, "hadst thou not then been apparently in

* Froissart, iii. 44. Sueyro, ii. 18.

God's protection, (for the French having staid for a wind till Hallowtide, and then having it half way, were beaten back, and the voyage made utterly void,) certainly thy ruin had then been certain! God, indeed, turned from us the merciless point of the French sword; but here began the seeds of innumerable other worse miseries, never to be remembered without sighs and tears."*

The seeds of those fearful calamities were indeed, as the same honest writer has remarked, then sown; but the people were not without some present taste of th[illegible] which are always brought upon them when[illegible] the government falls into the hands of a reckless faction. A great force had been assembled round the metropolis, that they might be ready to march against the enemy wherever a landing should be effected: all the towns and villages for twenty miles round about were full of men-of-arms and archers, "lying as it had been in camp;" and wanting both victuals and money, for they received no pay, but were left to live as they could, "they were driven to spoil, and to take by violence what they could get. And when at length they were licensed to depart home, many of them were constrained through necessity to sell their horses and armour, and some to rob as they went homeward."† When at length, upon the earnest suit of some of those great lords who had the service of the country at heart, a scanty supply was granted, the earl of Arundel, being lord admiral, was appointed to receive it, and fit out therewith a fleet. To this use it was faithfully

* Speed, 601. "What," says the honest chronicler, "shall we think or say of those popular lords, by this gentle king armed, to his own bane, with power and greatness, who, under the specious pretext of reforming abuses, did satisfy their envy and inbred insolency? The king tells them that England is, as they saw, in manifest danger, and prays their succour in money. What is the answer? That the Duke of Ireland (for now the marquis of Dublin was made a duke), and Michael at the Pole (so they scornfully called the earl of Suffolk), and others, must be removed. Things are badly carried at home, say they, and they said perhaps truly; but where was now the care of our country? Strange colours, for subjects to capitulate with their king, upon giving their joint aids against the common enemy, now ready with one destruction to overwhelm them all."

† Holinshed, ii. 773. Speed, 602.

appropriated; the lord admiral knew that his men would be inspected, for the prevention of such abuses as had been too common in the navy *: he was careful therefore to procure good men, and went to sea as well trimmed and appointed as was possible. The number of his ships is not stated, but according to Froissart there were 500 men-of-arms on board, and 1000 archers. The earls of Devonshire and Nottingham were in his company, and the bishop of Norwich, .. a prelate of most martial propensities, who may have been a good sailor, though he must needs have been a bad bishop, and had shown himself to be no better as a general. Another and more remarkable person embarked as a volunteer in this fleet, Pieter Vanden Bosch, one of the most distinguished, intrepid, and remorseless of the demagogues of Ghent. When that city submitted to the duke of Burgundy, he deemed it prudent to withdraw to England, where, by John of Gaunt's means, he had a pension of 100 marks assigned him from the duties paid on the exportation of wool by foreign merchants. He was an expert seaman, and repose † seems not to have suited one who had so long been accustomed to the strong excitement of revolutionary struggles. They lay off the mouth of the Thames, "abiding their adventure" in the beginning of March, and looking for the return of the Flemish fleet from Rochelle. The merchants of that place, of Flanders, Hainault, Holland, and other countries, standing in fear of the English, consorted together be-

A.D. 1387.

* "He spared for no costs," says Holinshed (778.), "to have the most choicest and pickedst fellows that might be gotten, not following the evil example of others in times past, which received tag and rag to fill up their numbers, whom they hired for small wages, and reserved the residue to their purses. And when, to the advancement of the realm's commodity, they should have encountered the enemies, they shifted off all occasions thereto, and only prolonged time, without atchieving any enterprize available, to the end they might receive the whole wages, and keep themselves from danger; which they should hardly have avoided when they had not about them such able men as were like to match the enemies. But the Earl of Arundel, contrarily, got the ablest men he might, not sparing his own purse; to the end that, by their service, he might atchieve some worthy enterprise, to redound unto the commodity of his country."

† "Aquel animo inquieto," says Sueyro, "buscava qualquier occasion en qui empliarse, aunque fuesse con daño de la patria y de los suyos."

fore they sailed from Flanders; and the duke had appointed them a convoy of six galleons under his admiral Hans Buyck, one of the best sea captains in those seas. They had engaged to keep company out and home, and stand by each other; and when they had taken in their lading at Rochelle, they were joined for security by certain French and Spanish ships consigned to merchants at Bruges. When they came opposite the mouth of the Thames, having gone so far without danger, they descried the English fleet; and "they in the tall ships said to their company, 'Sirs, advise ye well; we shall be met by the English army; they have perceived us; they will take the advantage of the wind and tide, and we shall have battle ere it be night.'" "The tidings," says Froissart, "were not pleasing to some, and specially to the merchants who had their merchandise aboard; they would gladly have been thence if they could. Howbeit, sith they saw that fight they must, and could not pass without it, they arrayed themselves thereto; there were there, arbalisters and others all armed and defenceable, more than 700 men. And Hans Buyck, who was right sage and hardy in arms, and had done great damage on the sea to the English, he set every thing in good order, and decked his ships well and wisely, as he could right well do, and said, 'Sirs, be not abashed: we are men enough to fight with the English army, and the wind will serve us, so that even while we be fighting we shall coast Flanders, and approach nearer and nearer to Sluys.' Some took good comfort with these words, and some not; so they put themselves in good order and defence, and made ready their cross-bows and their guns." *

It was on a Sunday, and the eve of Lady-day (for war keeps neither holiday nor Sabbath), that the Flemish fleet had been descried far off from the mast of one of the English ships; and the earl of Arundel,

* Holinshed, ii. 778. Froissart, iii. 52. Sueyro, i. 21, 22.

"greatly rejoicing at the news," immediately put to sea. The Flemings are described, when they approached, as making show of a determination to engage them, and the English as feigning to retire in seeming mistrust of being able to match these adversaries, who, coveting a safe passage rather than battle, passed by; but by this manœuvre the English "got the wind fit for their purpose." Their galleys came foremost with stress of oars, and the archers, with whom they were well manned, began to shoot fiercely, and lost much of their shot; for the Flemings kept under their decks, and would not expose themselves to the arrows, but drove along with the wind; and some of their cross-bowmen, who were out of the archers' reach, discharged their quarrels at advantage, so that the galleys lost many men, and were distressed; but then came up Arundel with his company, and the bishop of Norwich with his, and the main fleet. The enemy, however, inferior as they were in force, defended themselves bravely, and with right good will, Hans Buyck demeaning himself with equal skill and courage. He was in a great strong ship, and had three cannon, which discharged such great and heavy shot*, "that wherever they lighted they did great damage; and ever as they fought they drew by little and little toward Flanders; and there were some of the merchant ships which took the coast and the shoal water, and saved themselves, where the great ships could not follow them." But the engagement was continued with great eagerness on one side, and great resolution on the other, and there were "ships broken and sunk on both parts;" for out of the tops they cast down great bars of iron, which where they fell carried every thing before them down to the bottom. This was a hard battle and well fought, for it lasted three or four hours, and when day failed they drew apart and cast anchor,

* "Carreaux si gros et si grans," which lord Berners renders great stones. This may, probably, be right, but I have not ventured to follow him, because Froissart expressly says, quarrels, using the same word as for the cross-bow shot.

and rested all night, and drest their wounded men; and when the tide came they disanchored, and drew up sail, and returned fiercely and resolutely to the battle. Vanden Bosch, who had a command there of archers as well as seamen, is said to have "given the Flemings much to do that day, being sore displeased that they and the merchants should have resisted so long." No men, indeed, could have behaved better against such odds, but the stronger side prevailed more and more; and when they came between Blankenberg and Sluys, near Cadsant, "there was the discomfiture: where the Flemings, now close to their port, might have looked for succour, they found none; for there were no men-of-arms at Sluys, neither in ships nor in the town. Only the bailey of the place, Arnulf by name, got into a good bark of his own, with a few bold men of the place and twenty arbalisters, and rowed till he came to the fleets, just as the victory was completed. When he perceived this, he made his men discharge their cross-bows thrice in bravado, and was then chased into the haven with little danger to himself, his vessel being able to keep nearer the land than the English could follow him."*

Some of the Flemings got into Blankenberg, and some into Sluys; others, which were cut off from either place, Arundel pursued for two days, till he captured them; so that what in the battle and in the chase about 100 ships were taken. Buyck was made prisoner; and it is more honourable to him than to the English government, that they would consent neither to ransom nor exchange this brave and enterprising seaman. He was detained in London, as a prisoner at large, with all courtesy, under no other restriction than that of always sleeping in the city; and there, after three years, he died. This would not have been done in the days of the Black Prince. Vanden Bosch, whose old feelings seem to have recovered all their strength, would

* Froissart, iii. 52.

have had Arundel follow up his success, and make an attack upon Sluys; and Froissart says that if he had done so he would have won it, for the people of the town were greatly dismayed at the loss of the fleet, and doubted whether they should abandon the place, or go on board the ships, and defend the haven: but the English chiefs were of opinion that this would be a rash enterprise*; for if they entered Sluys and got possession of it, the people of Bruges, of Damme, and of Hardenburg would besiege them there, and they might lose all that they had won. They kept off the harbour, and attempted to burn the ships that were lying there; for this purpose they took the worst of their prizes, payed them well both within and without, and set them on fire, and so let them drive with wind and tide into the port, not caring to what nation the vessels belonged which might be consumed. But the attempt altogether failed. They remained some days off the coast, landing every day, and foraging on foot for want of horses, and burning towns and villages along the coast, and sometimes entering into the country; and when they were tired of this sort of warfare, in which there was little danger and no glory, they sailed for England with their prizes.

The booty taken in the fleet is estimated by Froissart at 200,000 franks. The quantity of wine is variously stated at 9000 tons or at 19,000, "whereby," it is the

* "Mais les Anglois ne l'avoient point eu courage, ni en conseil." This imputation of want of courage, is remarkable as coming from Froissart. He would not have read that sentence to the bishop of Norwich, who seems to have been much such another "good Christian" as my Cid's bishop, Don Hieronymo, "that perfect one with the shaven crown," who used to smite the Moors "for the love of charity," till the blood ran down from his upraised hand to his elbow.

"The earls," says Trussell, "in this service, for their valour and courtesy, got great reputation; and their actions did by so much appear the more honourable, by how much the unfortunate insufficiency of other generals, by whose either rashness, or cowardice, or both, many soldiers had been defeated every year, had been famous before for one loss or other. At their return, the king (more inclinable to revenge displeasure than reward desert, for it is troublesome to be grateful, but revenge is pleasant, and preferred before gain,) entertained them with strangeness of speech, and by his countenance seemed he was ill pleased, for that they had deserved so well." (10.) *It is evident, from this passage, that some blame was imputed to the commanders, for the vulgar-minded imputation upon the king is unworthy of notice.*

good chronicler's remark, "wine was the dearer all the year after in Flanders, Holland, and Brabant, and the better cheap in England, as it was reason: such are the adventures of this world; if one hath damage another hath profit." Before the earl of Arundel left the Flemish coast, the citizens of Middleburg came to him, "and requested that they might buy these wines of him, and pay for the same after the rate of 100 shillings the tun, alleging how they were the king's friends, and stood in need of wines. But the earl, thinking it," says Holinshed, "more reason that those which had borne the charges of the journey, to wit, the commons of the realm of England, should have the commodity thereof than any other, he denied their suit; but yet to show them some pleasure as his friends, he gave them twenty tuns to make merry with." The merchants of Zierickzee were more fortunate: they claimed part of the wines as being their property; their claim, it appears, was valid, and they had it restored. "Good cause there was," says Froissart, "why the English should deal courteously by them; for they of Zierickzee never would agree with the French to go against England, but roundly declared that they should take neither ships nor barges of theirs, whereby they came greatly into love and favour with the English." . . "As for that which fell to the earl's own share, he used," we are told, "such bountifulness in bestowing it among his friends, that he left not to himself so much as one tun. He won, therefore, no small praise, that, forbearing his own commodity, which he might have reaped in selling those wines to strangers, he had more regard to the profit of the commons, whereby they might understand, that that which they had laid forth towards the setting forward of his journey was not altogether lost, nor cast away. By these means, besides the commendation which he drew to himself, he also won the hearts and good will of the people, whose friendship is purchased by gifts and good deeds, since they make profit the mete-rod of amity, and bound in benevolence with

received benefits."* Richer captures have been brought home, but none, perhaps, ever before or since, that so literally gladdened the hearts of the people; for the rich wines of Poictou and Xaintonge, which they thought to have drank that year in Flanders, in Hainault, in Brabant, in Liege, and in many parts of Picardy, were sold in London and in other parts of England; and being uttered abroad there, made it so plentiful that, according to our own chroniclers, it was sold for a mark the tun, and the choicest for twenty shillings.†

While the invasion had been apprehended, Henry Percy,.. ever to be known by the appellation of Hotspur, given him by the Scotch, but fixed upon him by Shakspeare,.. was stationed at Calais, for the defence of that then most important place. "And, indeed," says Speed‡, "his nature did answer his by-name, for he made such ridings into the quarters about Calais, that they could never wish a worse neighbour." Afterward, when it was well understood that this fortress would not be attacked, he who was justly described as the pattern of all virtue and martial prowess, returned home, "to be present where the greatest danger was expected." If the king's favourites are not calumniated in this (as certainly they have been in other points), his zeal for the service of the country was but ill requited: they are charged with sending him to sea "to beat back the attempts of the enemy," but slenderly appointed to achieve any great enterprise; and this they are accused of having done "of some envious purpose, because he had got a name among the common people to be a very hardy and robust gentleman, as well among Englishmen as Scots." Whatever was the object of his expedition, or of those who sent him on it, he, "either ignorant of what had been devised against him, or disregarding it, boldly and valiantly executed the business enjoined him; and having remained abroad during the whole time of his appointed service, returned safely home."§

* Holinshed, ii. 778.
† Ibid. Fabyan, 533. Froissart, iii. 52.
‡ Page 601.
§ Holinshed, ii. 779.

When the armament at Sluys was broken up, it was ordained, "to show courage and good will," lest it might be said that the French were recreant to undertake this voyage, that early in May, when the sea should be fair and pleasant, an invasion should be effected. For this purpose the constable was to assemble 4000 men-at-arms and 2000 arbalisters at Treguier, where the chief preparations were to be made; every man was to take with him a horse, for without horses it was thought that they could not enter the country so as to carry on a successful war; and stores were provided for four or five months' consumption, the constable well knowing that the English, as soon as they knew of the coming of a host against them, would destroy every thing in the plain country, rather than that the enemy should profit by it. While one fleet was collected there, the admiral was to embark an equal force on board another at Harfleur for the same destination. These preparations were serious; yet in England they seem to have been little regarded, either because the last year's show of invasion had ended so pitifully, or because it was believed that the real purpose of the French was to withdraw John of Gaunt from his enterprise upon Castille, .. or, which is more probable, because those whose duty it was to attend to the cares of state were wholly occupied in factious combinations and commotions. Of this the French were well informed, and they expected to profit accordingly.* They intended to land in two bodies, one at Dover, the other in the Orwell; every thing was on board; the day for the departure of the expedition was fixed, and close at hand; and the men had received fifteen days' wages in advance, when the whole scheme was frustrated by one of those sudden strokes † of policy or

* Froissart, iii 63, 64.

† "If I should say that such matters fell in that season, and not open the matter clearly, which was great, perilous, and horrible, this might be a chronicle, but no history. I might let it overpass if I list, but I will not do so; I shall declare the cause, sith God hath given me the knowledge thereof, and time and leisure to chronicle the matter at length." — *Froissart.*

To the same purport, and touching this same subject, he elsewhere expresses himself thus characteristically: — "En si grand et si noble histoire

passion which we read of only in the history of barbarous times. During the siege of Calais, Charles de Blois and his two sons had been taken prisoners before Roche-darian by sir Thomas Dagworth, and sent to England. At the intercession of his cousin, queen Philippa, and against the opinion of the council, he was, after four years, set at liberty, upon engaging to pay a ransom of 200,000 nobles, for which he left both his sons as hostages. The sum, though large, was not deemed excessive for one who claimed the duchy of Bretagne, and, if he had won the dukedom, it would have been willingly raised by the people, among whom he was deservedly popular. In this pursuit, however, he failed; and when, twelve years after his deliverance, he fell in the battle of Auray, his ransom was still unpaid, and his sons were still detained accordingly. Theirs was a hard lot: the one died, and the other, Jean de Bretagne, though held in such easy and honourable custody as befitted his rank, looked upon his condition, after five-and-thirty years, as desperate. At this time, however, when utter hopelessness and a deep resentment of the indifference with which his relations regarded his fate, had made him weary of life, the duke of Bretagne, Jean de Montfort, made peace with the French, and did homage to the king of France.

The very circumstance which thus seemed to leave Jean de Bretagne no chance for deliverance, brought it about. Montfort had solicited and obtained English aid just before he came to these terms with the French. The promises which he had made to the English, and in reliance upon which they had marched into the country, were, of course, broken; but instead of endeavouring, by his personal conduct, to convince them that, though this had become necessary for him, his amicable and grateful feelings towards England had undergone no

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comme ceste est, (dont je sire Jehan Froissart ay esté augmenteur et reciteur, depuis le commencement jusques à maintenant, par la grace et vertu, que Dieu m'a donnée de si longuement vivre, que j'ay en mon temps veu toutes les choses d'abondance, et de bonne volonté,) n'est pas raison que j'oublie rien qui à ramentevoir face." iii. 50.

change, he let them suffer the utmost privations: their horses perished for want, and the men were reduced to gather thistles in the fields and pound them in mortars for food, and to bruise their corn in the same manner. This treatment excited great indignation in England; insomuch that the government offered to put Jean de Bretagne in possession of the duchy to which he had inherited his father's claims, and to give him John of Gaunt's daughter, Philippa, in marriage, if he would consent to hold that duchy from the king of England. The noble hostage refused to do any thing injurious to the crown of France: but he declared his willingness to marry the lady Philippa, and his desire to be set free as a consequence of that marriage. Here this negotiation ended: the lady Philippa was reserved to become, like the queen her grandmother, whose fortunate name she bore, the wife of an illustrious king, and the mother of an illustrious progeny. Another personage had at this time turned his thoughts toward the deliverance of Jean de Bretagne, and with intentions which were, perhaps, not less inimical to duke Jean de Montfort. This was the constable Olivier de Clisson. When the duke made his peace with France, one of the conditions was, that he should ransom Jean de Bretagne, a charge properly belonging to the duchy, and more especially now to him, as a point of honour and just feeling towards the son of his brave competitor and his own near kinsman. No steps, however, had been taken towards this; and Clisson, who was then on such terms of familiarity with the duke, as their fellowship in the English court had occasioned, and as seemed to imply friendship, ventured to tell him, that the performance of his engagement was looked for, and that the people liked him the less for delaying it. The duke asked where he was to find money for such a ransom; and Clisson made answer, that the people of Bretagne would make little objection to a tallage or a hearth-tax for such a purpose. "Messire Olivier," replied the duke, "my country shall not be so taxed.

My cousin has great princes of his lineage, . . the king of France and the duke of Anjou, . . they ought to aid him for they supported his cause in the war against mine; and when I swore that I would use my endeavours for his deliverance, my intention was that the king or his other relations should pay the money, and that I would aid with my words." *

If there were any latent enmity † between these two persons, such a representation on the one part, and such an avowal on the other, were sure to quicken it. The constable, who was well informed of the state of affairs in England, believed that he could make an easy composition for the prisoner, and raise his own family by so doing; accordingly he sent an agent over to communicate with Jean de Bretagne, and ask him whether if the constable procured his deliverance he would engage to marry his daughter? To this a consent was given as readily as to the proposed marriage with the lady Philippa, and no doubt the more willingly, because the proposal was clogged with no conditions. The more delicate part of the transaction was easily managed by means of the king of England's favourite, Robert de Vere, whom he had successively created earl of Oxford ‡, marquis of Dublin, and duke of Ireland. The constable offered him 30,000 marks; and, at the king's earnest instance, parliament authorised the bargain, and made a formal grant of this sum to the favourite, on condition that, being furnished with this money, he should pass over into Ireland before the next Easter, there to recover such lands as the king had given him. For as well the lords as the commons were so desirous

* Froissart, iii. 50.

† "*Le connestable de France ne pouvoit nullement aimer le duc de Bretaigne, ni le duc luy grant temps avant quelque semblant qu'ils se monstrassent*" When the English complained of their treatment in Bretagne, —"*bien savoit le connestable que telles parolles et murmurations, estoient communement entre les Anglois, sur le duc de Bretaigne; dont il n'estoit pas courroucé, car, pour un mal qu'on disoit de luy, il vousist autant qu'on en dist douze*" — *Froissart*, iii. 50.

‡ Of all the metamorphoses which English names have undergone in French, I do not recollect any one that has a stranger appearance than that of Oxford into Acquessuffort, which is Froissart's way of writing it.

to have him gone, that they wished the realm rather to spare so much treasure than to have his presence about the king." Here, then, was what, in modern language, is called a job, which had the rare fortune that it pleased the public as well as all the other parties concerned: the nobles who were discontented with Richard's government had the satisfaction of sending his favourite into a sort of exile; the nation thought itself well rid of an unpopular minion; Richard was gratified by obtaining such a grant for his friend; the duke of Ireland had the money which he wanted; Jean de Bretagne obtained his liberty after five-and-thirty years' captivity in a foreign land; and the constable effected for his daughter an ambitious marriage, after his own heart's desire, .. however it may have accorded with hers.

A more important consequence, which no one had anticipated resulted. This transaction averted from England an invasion, which, though prepared upon no great scale, would certainly have inflicted great evil, and might possibly, in the disordered state of the country, have obtained sufficient success to have drawn after it more formidable forces. The duke of Bretagne had hoped that his kinsman might die a prisoner, and that the claims of Charles de Blois would die with him: he saw him now enlarged, and connected by marriage with the most powerful person in that duchy, and indeed, so far as personal ability and reputation constituted power, in France; and if the English should take up his cause, for which he was conscious that he had given them sufficient provocation, he apprehended the greatest danger to himself.* He cast about, therefore, how to prevent this danger, and at the same time render such a service to England as should make amends for his late conduct. "He knew well," says Froissart, "that the man in the world

* Froissart makes him soliloquise thus: — "Voire! me cuide messire Olivier de Clisson mettre hors de mon heritage? Il en monstre bien les signifiances. Il a mis hors de prison Jehan de Bretaigne, et luy a donné sa fille par mariage. Telles choses me sont moult fort déplaisantes; mais par Dieu, je luy remonstreray, un jour qui viendra, qu'il n'a pas bien fait, quand il s'en donnera le moins de garde." III. 50.

whom Englishmen most hated was sir Olivier de Clisson, constable of France; for, indeed, sir Olivier de Clisson ever studied night and day how he might do displeasure to the English." This armament had been by him planned; he had directed the preparations, and by him it was to be commanded. The duke considered, therefore, that nothing could so certainly gratify the English, and recover for him their good will, and show at the same time that he made no great account of the love and faveur of the French, as to break up the expedition; and this he might do, not by prohibiting the Bretons to take part in it, but more surely and safely, by seizing the constable, or slaying him. "In this purpose he settled himself, and rested."*

To effect this treacherous intent he summoned his council to meet him at Vannes, and the constable among them, especially requiring him in his letters not to fail in his attendance, and saying, "he should gladlier see him than any other." He came accordingly: the council met, and debated at length upon many affairs, only the armament was not touched on; that being an affair of which the duke, as still in alliance with England, was supposed to take no cognisance. The duke entertained them that day at dinner, and "fed them afterwards with fair loving words till it was near night." The constable then invited the knights and squires of Bretagne to dine with him on the morrow: some did so, and some departed to their own homes, to take leave of their wives and parents; for his intention was, as soon as he departed from Vannes, to go straight to the fleet and embark forthwith. Most of the lords of the country were at this dinner: unexpectedly the duke joined them. Upon his entrance, "every man," says the chronicler, "rose, as reason was, and sweetly received him, as they ought to do their lord; and he demeaned himself right courteously, and took his seat with them, and ate and drank for good company, and showed them greater

* Froissart, iii. 64.

semblance of love than he had ever done before. And he said to them, 'Fair sirs, my friends and companions, God send you well to go, and well to return, and give you joy, and that you may do such deeds of arms as may please yourselves, and be honourable to you all.' Greatly were they pleased that he had come thus affably to visit them, and take leave of them at their departure."*

The duke had built a castle called Ermine, near Vannes: it was nearly finished at this time; and he invited the constable, with his brother-in-law, the sire de Laval, the sire de Beaumanoir, and others, to come with him and see it, .. what he had done there, and what he designed to do. Most of them mounted their horses and rode thither with him. When they arrived at the castle, the duke led them from chamber to chamber, and from building to building, and made them drink in the cellar. At last he brought them to the keep, leading the constable by the hand; and stopping at the entrance of the door, he said to him, "Sir Olivier, there is no man on this side the sea that understands works of masonry better than you; I pray you, fair sir, go up, and tell me what you think of the building of this tower. If it likes you, I shall be satisfied; if any thing be amiss, it shall be reformed." The constable, who thought no ill, replied, "I will go willingly sir; please you to lead the way." .. "No," said the duke, "go by yourself, and I will talk here the while with the sire de Laval." The constable then went up the stairs: when he had gone past the first story, armed men, who had been concealed in a chamber, appeared from it; some of them went down and bolted the door below; others seized him, led him into an apartment on the upper story, and there fettered him with three chains, .. and then asked pardon for what they had done, saying, "they must needs obey the orders of their lord the duke."

When the sire de Laval, being beneath at the stair-foot, saw the door closed, and heard it bolted, his blood

* Froissart, iii. 65.

began to tremble, and looking at the duke, who "waxed pale and green as a leaf," he knew that the matter went amiss. "Ah, sir," he cried, "mercy for God's sake! take no evil will against my brother-in-law the constable!"—"Sire de Laval," was the reply, "take your horse and depart: you may go if you will; I know well what I have to do."—"Sir," replied Laval, "I will never go hence without my brother-in-law." At these words, the sire de Beaumanoir came up, and he also asked for the constable. The duke, who had a hatred towards him also, drew his dagger, and said to him, "Beaumanoir, wilt thou be in the same point as thy master?"—"Sir," he replied, "I trust my master is in good case!"—"I demand of thee," the duke answered, "if thou choosest to be in the like case?"—"Aye, sir," said Beaumanoir;.. upon which the duke taking his dagger by the point, said, "If this be thy choice, it behoveth thee then to put out one of thine eyes!" Beaumanoir then seeing how "green he looked," knelt on one knee to him, and said, "Sir, I hold there is so much goodness and nobleness in you, that if it please God, you will do us nothing but right. We are come here at your bidding; do not dishonour yourself to accomplish any ill will against us, if such you have, for that would be too strange a thing."—"Go to," replied the duke, "thou shalt fare neither better nor worse than he!" so he was taken into another chamber which had been assigned for that purpose, and there fettered with three chains. "If he were then dismayed, it was not without sufficient cause; for he perceived well that the duke loved him but little, and the constable as ill."

Anon tidings spread through the castle, and through the town, that the constable and the sires de Beaumanoir and Laval were taken prisoners, but that Laval might depart at his will, for the duke had no quarrel against him: touching the other two, the opinion was that the duke would put both to death, he hated them so mortally. "Then was the duke greatly blamed of all knights and squires that heard thereof: they said

"there was never a greater defamation on any prince than there was now on the duke of Bretagne. He invited the constable to dine with him, and the constable went; after this he went to visit him at his lodging, and drank of his wine, and asked him to go with him and look at his building, and then he seized him there. Never was such a thing heard of; he was entirely infamed; and never was man more dishonoured. No man will ever again put trust in any great prince, seeing that the duke has by such crooked and deceitful ways entrapped these brave men. What will the king of France say, when he shall hear the news, and that his expedition is broken up? Now hath the duke shown openly that he is English, and will hold the king of England's part, when he hath thus broken up the army that should have gone against England. What ought the knights and squires of this duchy to do when they shall hear this? what, but incontinent to leave their houses, and lay siege to the castle of Ermine, and there beleaguer the duke till they take him alive or dead, and then carry him like a false prince and a disloyal to the king of France, and deliver him into his hands?" This was the language of knights and squires in the market-place of Vannes, and of the lords who had attended the duke's parliament. Most of them verily thought that the prisoners would be put to death; others said that the sire de Laval would prevent it; for he was so wise a man, and so prudent, that he would dissuade the duke from such wrong.

Laval, indeed, gave good proof of his wisdom in remaining with the duke: three times in the course of that night the constable was unfettered and brought forth to be put to death; once the duke was for beheading him, and twice for having him drowned; and to one of these deaths he would have been put, if Laval had not knelt before the duke, weeping and with uplifted hands, at once entreating and reasoning with him. "Ah, sir," he said, "for God's sake mercy! advise yourself, and use no such cruelty upon my brother-in-law; he can

in no way have deserved death. Of your grace I beseech you to tell what it is that moves you to be so grievously incensed against him! I swear to you, that for any misdeed which he hath done toward you he shall make such amends with his body and goods, or I for him, or both of us together, as you yourself shall determine and think sufficient. Remember, sir, for the love of God, how in your youth you were brought up together in the duke of Lancaster's house, that loyal and gentle prince. Mercy, sir, for God's sake! Call to mind how faithfully he served you before he made his peace with the king of France! and how he aided you to recover your heritage, and how you ever found in him good support and good counsel. Though you be now moved against him he hath not deserved death."—"Sire de Laval," the duke replied, "let me do my will, for Clisson has often displeased me, and it is now time that I should show him my displeasure: go you your way; I ask nothing of you, and let me show my cruelty, for I will that he shall die." The diligence of the great chronicler of those times in collecting information was such, and his opportunities so good, that he may not unlikely have reported here the substance of the words which really were used; but even if the dialogue be as fictitious as that of a drama, it faithfully represents the character and feeling of the age, and of the individuals; for Froissart passed his life in the society which he so admirably describes.* "Ah, sir," the sire de Laval made

* The chapter in which he relates how he obtained all the particulars of this transaction begins with this characteristic passage:—"On me pourroit demander qui voudroit, dont telles choses me viennent à savoir, pour parler si proprement, et se vivement. Je respondroye à ceux qui m'en demandoroyent, qui grande cure et grande diligence j'ay mis en mon temps, pour le savoir, et ay cherché maint royaume, et maint pais, pour faire juste enqueste de toutes les choses, qui cy-dessus sont contenues en ceste histoire, et qui aussi en après descendront. Car Dieu me donna la grace et le loisir d'en veoir en mon temps la greigneur partie, et l'avoir la cognoissance des haux princes et seigneurs, tant en France comme en Angleterre. Car sachez qui l'an de grace mil, trois cens, quatre vingtr et dix, j'y avoye labouré trente et sept ans, et à ce jour j'avoye d'age cinquante et sept ans. Si peut un homme beaucoup veoir et apprendre durant le terme de trente sept ans, quand il est en sa force, et qu'il est bien de toutes parties. Or fu-je, des ma jeunesse, cinq ans de l'hostel du roy d'Angleterre et de la royne; et si fu bien venu en l'hostel de Jehan roy de France, et du roy Charles son fils. Si peu bien, sur tel terme, apprendre et concevoir moult de choses; et pour

answer, "for God's sake have mercy; refrain yourself; moderate a little your courage, and regard reason! If you put him to death, never was prince so dishonoured as you will be. There will be in Bretagne neither knight nor esquire, city nor castle, nor good town, nor any man whatsoever, that will not hate you to the death, and do their utmost to disherit you. The king of England and his council will give you no thanks. Will you thus lose yourself for the sake of taking away the life of one man? For God's sake take some better imagination: it is too great dishonour to put to death so great a baron and so gentle a knight as the sire de Clisson; it would be a treason and a reproach here, and before God, and through the whole world. He came here at your bidding, he drank of your wine, and he did whatever you asked him to do. Was this great love shown him that you might put him to death? Never so great reproach came upon any lord as will be brought upon you, if you do this thing. All the world will reproach you, and hate you, and war upon you. I will tell you what you shall do, since you hate him so much. You shall put him to ransom for a great sum of florins; this you may well do. And if he hold any town or castle that should be yours, demand them of him, and you shall have them. Whatever covenant you make with him, I will be pledge for it on his part."

Laval never left the duke during the whole night, but still kept close to him; and when he made this proposal, it wrought upon the duke, and made him somewhat refrain his evil will. At last he said, "Sire de Laval, you have been a good mean for him, and I would have you know that the sire de Clisson is the man in the world whom I most hate, and if you had not been here he should not have escaped death this night: your words have saved him. Go to him, and demand if he will pay me 100,000 franks, incontinently.

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certain, c'éstoit la greignéur imagination et plaisance que j'avoye, que tous jours enquerir avant, et du retenir, et tantost escrire, comme j'en avoye fait les enquestes." iii. 75.

'I will neither have you nor any other to pledge, but the ready money; and then if he will moreover put me in possession of Castles Brot, Josselin, and Le Blanc, and the town of Jugon, that done, I will deliver him to you." Laval thanked the duke for thus yielding to his entreaties, and readily undertook that his brother-in-law should consent to these terms; Clisson consented to them before he knew what they were, and asked Laval to go and raise the money, and see that the places were given up. "That will I not do," replied Laval, "nor ever depart from this castle till I take you with me; for the duke is right cruel, and if I were absent he might repent of what he has agreed to, upon some vain thought or information that he may have against you, and then all would be broken." They agreed that Beaumanoir should go, who was released accordingly from his chains, and was despatched with letters from the constable authorising what was to be done. The whole country was by this in commotion; and if they had not now been assured by Beaumanoir that the constable's life was safe, the knights and squires of Bretagne, assembled as they were for the expedition against England,.. all thought of which was at once abandoned,.. would presently have besieged the duke in his castle. The armament at Treguier dispersed without waiting for orders; that at Harfleur was kept together only for a few days, till it should be seen whether it would be necessary to march against the duke. The places were given up, the money paid; Clisson was then set at liberty; and, going with all speed to Paris, he made his complaint to the king, telling him how greatly this wrong affected his royal majesty, and how it had entirely broken up the expedition on which he had been ordered. "Your father," said he, "whom God pardon, made me constable of France, which office I have to my power well and truly exercised; and if there be any, your grace and my lords your uncles alone excepted, who will say that I have not acquitted myself truly, or have done any thing contrary to the crown of France, I am

here ready to throw down my gage in that quarrel. But this wrong having been done me, when I was in the exercise of my office, I here yield it up: provide, sirs, another constable, such as shall please you. I will no longer bear the charge thereof; I should have no honour in bearing it!" The king raised him up, assured him that the peers of France should immediately be assembled upon this matter, and that justice should be done him: "Constable," he added, "we will not that you depart from your office in this manner, but that ye use it till we take farther counsel." The constable knelt down again, and replied, "Sir, this matter toucheth me so near, that I cannot use it: the office is great; for I must speak with and answer every man, and I am so troubled, that I can answer no man: wherefore I request your grace to provide another for a season, and I shall always be ready at your command."

The king had manifested towards him the generous feeling of a young and noble mind; but when the constable went to prefer his complaint before the dukes of Berry and Burgundy, as governors of the realm. he perceived that their feelings were not so soon moved; they appeared less disposed to resent the wrong which he had received, than to censure him for having gone to Vannes upon the duke's summons. He replied it was a summons from which he could not excuse himself: but to this the duke of Burgundy properly made answer, that he might have done so, because his fleet was ready, and the expedition waiting for him. "Moreover," he said, "when the parliament was over, and you had dined with him, and returned to your own hotel, and all had gone well, what business had you to make any longer tarriance, or to go to his castle of l'Ermine?"—"Monseigneur," replied Clisson, "he showed me such fair semblances that I durst not refuse him."—"Constable," said the duke, "in fair semblances are great deceptions. I thought you more subtle than you are. But go your way: the matter shall be well settled: we will look to it at leisure." This treatment was so much

"harder and ruder" than what he had met with from the king, that Clisson thought they were ill disposed towards him; and, under that persuasion, he retired to his own lands, to abide the issue, the important office of constable remaining void. Their conduct, however, proceeded from a different motive. France had just received a declaration of war, couched in the haughtiest terms, from the duke of Gelderland, who found it for his interest, at that time, to enter into alliance with, and receive a subsidy from, England. No doubt was entertained that the hostilities thus unexpectedly announced were designed to favour an invasion by the English; and such a project the French statesmen knew would accord equally with the interest of the English government and the inclination of the people. The state of society in that age was such, that no country, unless it were engaged in foreign war, could hope to be free from domestic troubles; and this was peculiarly the case with England, which, when it carried the war into an enemy's country, was, by reason of its insular situation, safe. Richard II. was not so weak a prince but that he saw this was the best means of employing men who would otherwise endanger his throne: it accorded with the feelings in which his ambitious uncles had been trained up; and the threatened invasion from Sluys had called forth a cry in the nation, in which, though it has been ascribed to "such as loved evil rule rather than good," there can be no doubt that many a brave English spirit generously united. "Where be now," it was said, "those great enterprises, and those valiant men of England, that were in the days of king Edward, and of the prince his son? Then we were wont to enter France in such guise, that none durst make battle with us, or if they did, they were soon discomfited. Oh, what a deed was that when that noble king Edward discomfited king Philip and all the power of France at Cressy; and when the Black Prince took the French king John, and discomfited his puissance, at Poictiers, with a handful of people, against the numbers

that king John had with him! In those days, England was feared every where, and we were spoken of, through all the world, for the flower of chivalry; but now no man speaketh of this. The king in France is but a boy, and yet he hath done more against us than any of his predecessors, and hath shown great courage to have come into England: and the let thereof was not by him. The time hath been that, if such an apparel of ships had been made at Sluys, they should have been fought withal in the haven; and now the noble men of England are joyful, if they may sit at rest! The time hath been when great conquests have been made in France, and the riches gained there were spread abroad in this realm. But it appeareth well that we in England are feebled of wits: we were wont to know every thing that the French intended three or four months beforehand, whereby we had time to provide accordingly; but now our counsels are known by them, not theirs by us."* This was the language, not of the common people only, but of knights and squires; of those alike who thirsted for honourable employment, or who were greedy for plunder; and the feeling became dangerous, because there went with it an ignorant persuasion, that the glorious wars of the preceding reign had been carried on without any extraordinary imposts upon the people, and a belief that they suffered by the peculation of the king's ministers, and the king himself by their treachery.

Knowing the state of affairs in England, the French rulers gave the English government credit for a policy which, under like circumstances, they would have pursued. They knew also, that the duke of Bretagne had applied to England for support, and was storing all his strong places, and levying troops. For these reasons, they deemed it necessary to dissemble their deep resentment of the outrage committed upon the constable†;

* Froissart, iii. 63.

† "Si ne vouloient pas les nobles du royaume de France, qui le royaume avoient à conseiller, laisser telle bruine de Bretaigne, qu'elle ne fust abbattue,

and, in the wisdom of this course, the admiral and the sire de Coucy, though they warmly took up the constable's cause, agreed. They sent, therefore, his kinsman, the count d'Estampes; who, under pretext of making the duke a friendly visit, was to assure him, that the king and his uncles were in the best disposition towards him; that it would be much for his honour to restore the constable's places, which he had taken with such light cause; and that the king would give him, in exchange for them, others as good, at his own choice, in any part of the kingdom. The count watched his time, and insinuated the matter of his embassy with the desired address; but the only reply he could obtain was, that the duke would think about it: and that he had not yet sufficiently considered it. After a fortnight's tarriance, in vain expectation of a favourable answer, the count took his leave; but, to show that he had been no unwelcome ambassador, the duke presented him at his departure with a jewel worth 1000 francs, and a white palfrey, with trappings fit for a king.* The duke of Bretagne had shown no want of courage or of decision in his conduct, till he acted dishonourably: that crime brought with it, if not condign punishment, secret shame, and miserable irresolution. He was now sensible that neither France nor England could ever again place confidence in him; that if France were inclined to deal leniently towards him respecting his late outrage, it was only because present circumstances rendered it useful to conciliate him; and that, on the other hand, though England was ready to assist him, none of that feeling would be called forth in English hearts which had manifested itself so gloriously in his mother's cause and in his own, while he was without reproach. From France he had much to fear; and from England much to hope, in case those fears should be verified. While, therefore, he let his kinsman return

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ou ostée aucunement, par bon conduit bon incident, pourquoy le royaume fust hors de celle doute." — *Froissart*, iii. 107.

* Froissart, iii. 107.

to Paris, with an impression that he might be induced to obey the king's will, he continued his preparations for defence, and brought over most of the great towns to his party, though the nobles of the province manifested a resentment of his conduct which he was not likely to overcome. He procured a promise of aid from the young king of Navarre, engaging to assist him in recovering the family possessions in Normandy, which France had conquered from his father; and, distracted with factions as England at that time was, his representations there were deemed of such weight, that the earl of Arundel was sent, with 1000 men-at-arms and 3000 archers, to hover off the coast, and land whenever opportunity should be ripe for them.*

The English were too early with this aid: it had the effect, not of determining the duke to resist the king of France's authority, but of confirming the French princes in their purpose of temporising with him, strengthening the opinion of those who dissuaded the king from marching against the duke of Gelderland, and drawing attention to the coast. Measures were taken for the defence of Normandy; and Clisson, acting with his wonted decision, placed garrisons in St. Malo and St. Matthieu, in the king's name. These important places, on which the duke had counted, were thus secured against him; and his hope of co-operation from the king of Navarre was also frustrated, because that project had depended upon the support to be derived from John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, then in Spain: but this could no longer be expected, because that ambitious prince was openly treating for the marriage of his daughter with the duke of Berry. Taking advantage of this, the French rulers sent the sire de Coucy, the sire de la Rivière, and the admiral Jehan de Vienne, to require restitution from the duke. Troubled at the report of their coming, and at the aspect of his affairs, he convoked his council, and they gave him such advice as

* Froissart, iii. 109. Holinshed, ii 796.

was to be expected from upright men who condemned his conduct. The projected marriage of the duke of Berry was likely, in its immediate consequences, to lead to a peace with England, or at least a long truce. It was evident, by the choice of the ambassadors, that the king of France considered this business a weighty one; and the army which was then raising, as if for Gelderland, might be directed against him. What in that case could he do? His aid from Navarre must fail with the change in the duke of Lancaster's views. The English had enough to do at home, and would only serve him, when by so doing they could serve themselves: this he ought to know, for he had experienced it before, and had been bred among them. Moreover, the better part of the prelates, barons, knights, cities, and good towns of the country, were all against him in this matter. "We tell you," said they, "since you ask our advice, that it is more than ever time for you to bethink yourself; and take means for preserving that inheritance which has cost you so much blood, and labour, and pain, and to abate a little the edge of your hatred. We know that you hold messire Olivier de Clisson in great hatred, and that he has often grievously offended you, as you have him, albeit he is not your peer. But, seeing that the king of France and the king's uncles, and the barons of France, take up his cause, it is not our advice, nor would it be that of any man who loves you, that you should engage in war against the French. What, then, is to be done with those castles that you have taken from him? They would cost you more, even in peace, to keep them, in three years, than you could profit from them in twelve. If you restore them now, simply, and while it is known . . (for nothing can be done but what is known) . . that you do it amicably, and without constraint, you will overcome the angry will of many; and the duke of Burgundy will render you all the service he can, for the sake of my lady of Burgundy, your good friend and cousin, their children being those who, at present, are nearest to you. Think well of it, therefore,

and do not alienate yourself from those towards whom you ought to draw; for this would be folly, and you would be little pitied for the consequences."

When the duke had heard them represent, thus reasonably, the peril in which he stood, he was greatly abashed, and remained for some time in silence, leaning upon a window that looked into the court. At length he turned to them and said, "Sirs, I believe that you have counselled me to the best of your power: and there is nothing but good counsel that I need. But how may perfect love be nourished where there is nothing but hatred? How can I love Olivier de Clisson, who hath done me so many displeasures? The thing in the world of which I most repent me is, that I did not put him to death when I had him in my castle of l'Ermine." Upon the propriety of such an act, or of such repentance, they offered no opinion. "He ought not to have ransomed him," they said, "nor to have taken his castles. The constable hath entered his quarrel and plea against you in the parliament of Paris; sentence will be given against you there, for there is none to answer for you: then he and his heirs will have just cause to make war upon you in his own right; and if the king, with others of your own country, will aid him, ye will need to have more power for defending yourself than you are like to have. Wherefore, while the plea is depending, it is better for you to deliver up the castles than abide the sentence. Agree, sir, as well as you can, for such damage as you have done; so will you put away the scandal of the people, which ought greatly to be feared because of the dishonour; and so will you bring yourself again into a state of peace and love, such as beseems you, with the king of France, your sovereign and natural lord, and with my lord of Burgundy, and your cousins his children."—"Well," replied the duke, "I see plainly, that since I have asked counsel it behoveth me to take it. I will do as ye have advised." *

The places were given up accordingly without delay

* Froissart, iii. 112.

to the constable's people; but the duke's humiliation was not yet complete. Restitution of the money which he had exacted was yet to be made; and it was determined that he must present himself before the king and the peers of France at Paris, to make his excuse before them, and there abide such sentence of amends as they, after due deliberation in council, might think proper to deliver. Some art, however, was to be used for effecting this, lest they should provoke him to a resistance which might be the more dangerous after he had so far made amends, and thereby set himself right in the opinion of his people. The three barons, therefore, who were on their way, were instructed to persuade him that it would be sufficient if he went to Blois, where, being half way to Paris, the dukes of Berry and Burgundy would meet him. He was not easily induced to consent; and when at length he yielded to their joint opinion, and more especially to the artful management of the sire de Coucy, it was with a declared determination that he would go no farther; and the sire de Coucy said they desired nothing more. But the royal dukes met him there with a full intention that he should proceed to Paris, whether he liked it or not. He came with no greater train than his rank required, .. some 300 horse, .. not apprehending that any violence would be offered him; after what his own conduct had been, he could reproach no one for entrapping him: but their purpose went no farther than that of compelling him to make full restitution, and the most public submission to the king. The meeting was courteous; they made him good cheer, and thanked him for having taken the trouble of coming so far; he on his part, making the most of the fatigue, and saying that, to show his love for them, he had performed a journey which nothing else could, in his state of health, have induced him to undertake. They soon let him know that, since he had come so far, and was there, it was doing nothing unless he went on to Paris to pay his respects to the king, who was most desirous of seeing him. From this he would full fain have excused him-

self. "He was too unwell," he said, "for such a journey; neither was he, in other respects, prepared for it, having left Bretagne with so small a train, and with the intention of immediately returning thither." They, on the other hand, more courteously than agreeably, replied, that, "saving his pleasure, too large a train would not have been becoming when he was going to the presence of his sovereign lord; that if he was not well enough to perform the journey on horseback, they were provided with chair* or litter, in which he might travel more easily; and that he was bound to do homage, and had not yet performed it." Still he would have declined. "When the king should be of age," he said, "and have taken upon himself the government, then he would go to Paris, or whithersoever else the king might please to summon him, and perform homage as he ought." An untenable argument ever weakens the cause which it is meant to support. The royal dukes disposed of this by replying, "that the king was of sufficient age and judgment to receive homage; that all the other lords of the realm who held under him had done their homage, and made relief, and that the king was in the twenty-first year of his age."

Thus pressed, and finding that no excuse would be admitted, the humbled duke said, "Well, sirs, if I go to Paris it will be greatly against my will, and to my prejudice; for messire Olivier de Clisson either is there, or will come there, and I neither love him nor ever shall, nor he me; and he will assail me with unpleasant and impetuous words: see, now, what great mischiefs may ensue!" — "Nay, nay, fair cousin," they made answer, "make you no difficulty on that score! we will swear to you, solemnly and veritably, that you shall neither see nor speak with the constable, nor Jehan de Bretagne, unless you wish it; but see the king, who is desirous of seeing you, and the barons and knights of

* Chair is the word used by lord Berners; the original is char. Some sort of chair or palanquin is more likely than any kind of wheeled carriage that could then have been in use.

France, who will make you good cheer: and when you have done that for which you go thither, you shall return without peril and without hurt." In reliance upon their word and oath, which were sincerely pledged, he consented to what he plainly felt he had no power of refusing. To Paris accordingly he proceeded; and having slept the preceding night at Bourg-la-Royne, entered it in full state the following morning at ten o'clock. It was Sunday, so that every body was at leisure to behold an entrance which had occasioned much talk and much expectation; every one being desirous of seeing the person who had seized and put in danger so great a personage as the constable of France. He rode to the Louvre, and there alighted, having been duly instructed as to the ceremony which he was to perform. The great lords who were of his kin, or of his council, accompanied him: there was a great press to see him; and the hall into which he was introduced, and in which the tables were spread for the king's dinner, is described as being but small. The king was standing before the table, and his uncles of Berry, Burgundy, and Bourbon, beside him.* As soon as the duke entered, the way was opened for him, every man on one side or the other making place, that nothing might intercept their view of each other. First, the duke knelt on one knee, then rose; passed on some ten or twelve paces, then knelt a second time; arose again, and advanced till he came before the king, when he knelt for the third time, bare-headed, and saluted the king, saying, "Sire, I am come to see you; God maintain your prosperity!"—"Gramercy," the king replied, "we have a great desire to see you, and we will see and speak with you at leisure." So saying he took him by the arm and made him rise. The duke then inclined himself to all the princes who were present, one after another, and then remained standing before the king, and in silence, the king looking on him steadily. A sign was then made that the maitre-d'hôtel should bring the water, and the duke put his hand to the basin and towel while the king washed:

this done, he was re-conducted to the court, where his horses stood, and so went to his lodging.

In the interviews which he afterwards had with the king and his uncles, all passed off well: the promise which had been made to him concerning the constable and Jehan de Bretagne was faithfully kept. As long as he was in Paris they knew that nothing serious would be attempted by the English; and in Paris they were determined to keep him as long as they thought fit, not by imposing any forcible restraint upon him, but by the forms of law attendant upon the process that was instituted against him, and which might be indefinitely prolonged.* While, therefore, he was treated with all marks of respect, he had this mortification to endure. How long he was thus detained is not stated; but when all purposes of policy had been answered, and it was thought that he had been sufficiently humiliated, the king sent for him to Montereau sur Yonne, where he was received with the same courtesy, and the final adjustment was made. The sum which he had extorted from the constable had been expended in storing and garrisoning his strong places, and in raising foreign troops for designs which had now been frustrated. Present payment was not in his power; it was agreed, therefore, that he should repay it by instalments of a fifth part annually for five years. This having been settled, he was well entertained, and dismissed with presents of jewels by the king; after which, having discharged his heavy costs at Paris, he returned into his own country, there to chew the bitter cud, . . not of repentance, which had been wholesome, but of humiliation and of hatred.†

* "Or le roy de France se departit de Paris, quand on eut parlementé et traitté aucunement au duc de Bretaigne, et nompas encores tout accomply; car la court du roy de France est moult longue quand on veut; et tres bien on y fait tenir les gens, et faire le leur despendre, et petitement besongner." — *Froissart*, iii. 116

† Froissart, iii. 116. 121. "Now," says Froissart, "in this place let us leave to speak of the duke of Bretagne; for, as far as I could hear, he has held well the agreement made with the French king and his uncles, and has done nothing since to be spoken of, up to the time that I finished this book. I cannot tell if he will do any thing more; if he do, I shall speak

Arundel, meantime, with the English fleet *, kept hovering off the coasts of Normandy and Bretagne, in expectation of advice from the duke when and where to land. When the season advanced, and they deemed it certain that their summons could not long be delayed, they came to anchor off an island on the Breton coast; and when they had lain there more than a month, obtained intelligence at last that the duke had gone to confer with the king's uncles at Blois; and that, in consequence of what had passed with them, he had proceeded to Paris. He had frustrated the proposed invasion of England; and it was evident now that the English armament, which had been sent out at his solicitation, was to be rendered equally vain by his change of purpose. Urgent as the motives might be which induced him to act thus, and necessary as it was to brook such treatment, Arundel deemed it unbecoming to return from a bootless expedition: he held a council of war, and it was resolved that they should approach Rochelle, and land in the Rochellois; seeing that, although they had no strong place to support them, they were enough to meet in the field the whole power of Xainctonge and Poictou. They hired, therefore, a trusty messenger, who was to make his way into the Lemosin, and direct Perrot le Bearnois, who held a command there for the English, to collect what force he could there and in Auvergne, and make such movements in those provinces as should prevent any force from being despatched from thence against them. There was little

thereof according as I shall know." (iii. 121.) He had a great deal more to relate of him in the subsequent volume, and of his continued hatred to Olivier de Clisson, which, mutual and hearty as it was, gave way at length to a sense of interest on the duke's part, and a generous feeling on that of his enemy.

* "They had with them," says Froissart, "vessels called balniers coursiers, qui flottoient sur la mer, and went before them seeking adventures, in like manner as certain knights and esquires a-land, mounted upon the flower of the horses, go before the main battles, and prick forward to discover ambushes." (iii. 110.) In another chapter, speaking of this same fleet, he calls these vessels ballenicrs, "qu' escumeurs de mer par coustume ont volontiers, et qui approcheront les terres de plus pres, que les autres vaisseaux ne font." iii. 128.

reason to doubt the speed of their agent, who was a Breton, perfectly conversant in the French, English, and Spanish languages, as well as in his own tongue, and who carried with him nothing by which his errand could possibly be discovered. This done, they weighed anchor and made towards Rochelle full sail, "at the will," says *Froissart*, "of God and the wind. They had the weather and the tide with them; for it was so fair and serene, and the wind so to a point for them, that it was a goodly sight to behold these ships upon the sea. One and another they were about sixscore, with banners and streamers * waving in the wind, richly emblazoned with the arms of the lords, which glittered against the sun. Thus they went on sailing over the fair and favouring sea, that seemed as if it had great delight in wafting them. And as a horse, well-rested and well-fed, when he comes out of the stable, neighs in the feeling of his strength, so the sea, with the aid of the wind, which was at their wish, seemed to move onward, and might, by a figure, be thought to say, merrily and boldly, 'I am for you; I will bring you safely to harbour.'" †

They anchored in the harbour of Rochelle opposite Marant. Some 200 adventurers, without waiting for high water, got into their boats as soon as the tide served, and so entered that town. The watch from the castle,

* "Venteloient sur estrainnieres," Denis Sauvage says in a marginal note. "Verard dit *estrannieres*; mais je confesse n'entendre ne l'un, ne l'autre." The context, however, explains the word, which was understood by lord Berners, and which is found in Roquefort's Glossary, . . Estrainniere, estrannere; *drapeau, étendard.*

† So characteristic a passage should be given in its original language, for it must needs lose something in translating. "Quand — se furent departis des bendes de Bretaigne, ils singlerent, à l'entente de Dieu et du vent à plain voile. Car ils avoient le temps et la marée pour eux, et faisoit si bel et si sery, et vent si à point, que grand plaisir estoit de veoir ces vaisseaux sur la mer, car ils estoient environ six vingts voiles, uns et autres; et ventoloient sur estrainnieres trop gentement armoyées des armes des seigneurs, qui resplendissoient contre le soleil. Ainsi s'en vindrent ils, tout nageant et flottant, parmi celle mer, qui lors estoit haitée, et monstroit qu'elle eust grande plaisance d'eux porter. Ainsi comme un cheval, agrené et sejourné, quand il est hors de l'estable, a grande faim de hennir, ainsi la mer, avec l'aide du vent, qui luy estoit si à point comme à son hait, monstroit cheminer. Ce pouvoit elle dire par figure, liément et hardement: 'Je suis pour vous. Je vous mettray en havre et port, sans peril.'" iii. 116.

seeing the fleet arrive, and the boats making for the river, blew the alarm, and the inhabitants lost no time in removing their best effects into the castle; "and well for them," says the chronicler, "that they did so, otherwise they would have lost all. When they saw the English at their heels, they left the rest, and thought only of saving themselves. The invaders immediately fell to pillage, as for pillage they were come; and little they found there except large empty chests: but of corn, bacon, and other provisions, they found good store, and more than 400 pipes of wine, in guard of which seasonable supply they determined to remain there that night. On the morrow the main force landed, leaving the great ships, which could not approach the shore, at anchor, with 100 men-at-arms, and 200 archers, to protect them. They encamped between Marant and Rochelle, which was four short leagues distant. The news soon spread; and not the open country only, but the towns and castles were alarmed, and kept good watch; and the villagers began to take flight and remove their goods into the woods, or wherever they could, with all speed.

If the English had been provided with horses, they might have over-run the country, for it was altogether unprepared for defence. Though an enemy's fleet had so long been lying off the coast, there was no commander in the province. The seneschals were not in their respective districts; the barons and knights, who might have brought together a sufficient force to have encountered these invaders, looked only each to the preservation of his own; the people followed their example, hastening only to gather in the harvest, and secure it where they could; and if there were any who were disposed to take the lead for the defence of the land, they were distracted between the alarm of the debarkment and that which Perrot le Bearnois excited by his incursions. The seneschal of Rochelle was employed by the duke of Berry at a distance; but there were two brave knights in the town, by name messire

Pierre de Jouy and messire Taillepié, whom the seneschal had left to perform his functions during his absence. Rochelle was a populous place: these knights called together the mayor and the principal inhabitants, and said to them, "Sirs, we must go look at these Englishmen in their lodging, and give them a welcome; for which they shall either pay us, or we will pay them! We shall be blamed if we let them remain there at their ease. And there is one point which is right good for us; they have no horses; they are men of the sea, and we are well mounted. We will send our arbalisters before, to wake them with their quarrels, and, when they have done this, to return. The English will issue out against them on foot: we will let the arbalisters pass into the town, and receive the enemy at the spear's point; and, being on horseback, we shall have them at such vantage that we may do them great hurt." The proposal was thought good, and, before daybreak on the morrow, some 1200 arbalisters and tall men sallied from Rochelle; while the horsemen, 300 in number, made ready to follow and support them. The plan was not so well laid but that the English, if they had had any intimation or suspicion thereof, might have laid an ambush and cut off the whole party. There was a want of due vigilance in the English camp: strict watch was kept there during the night; but no sooner had the sun risen (and this was at the beginning of August), than, as if all danger of a sudden attack were over, the sentinels went to their quarters, where the army lay upon straw, in huts constructed of green boughs. They were roused there by a shower of viretons from the cross-bows: six discharges the enemy made, which rattled through the boughs, and wounded many, before the English knew that the enemy were upon them. They were presently upon their feet: the arbalisters retreated as they had been instructed, and more than apace when they saw with what alacrity the men whom they had thus roused came out against them, . . for they feared the English arrows. The horsemen covered the retreat,

falling back as fast as they could, while making head against an eager enemy. Arundel, himself, was foremost in the pursuit, with about 400 men-at-arms, each having "his spear in hand, or on his neck;" the two knights, at whose advice the sally had been made, did their devoir in presenting themselves to the brunt of the danger, and both narrowly escaped death, just as they reached the barriers. Pierre de Jouy had his horse killed under him there, and was with great difficulty drawn in by his people. Taillepié was pierced through the thigh with a spear, and wounded with an arrow through his bacinet, and the horse, which bore him into the town fell there dead under him. About forty were slain or wounded there; but the townsmen "got above the gate, and, by the stones which they cast down, and by their guns, prevented the English from pursuing their advantage farther."*

The men of Rochellé did not repeat an adventure which had succeeded so ill, and in which both their captains had been wounded; and the invaders made three or four incursions into the Rochellois towards Bresvire, and into the land of Thouars, to the great damage as well as dismay of the country. It was well for the French that they came without horses and found none; and well, perhaps, for themselves also, . . or the little resistance which they met with might have tempted them to proceed so far that they might have found it difficult to retreat. Arundel, however, conducted himself with great prudence. He stored himself plentifully with wine and fresh provisions; and, contenting himself with this, and with having done enough by this debarkation to show that no discredit could be attached to him for the failure of the expedition, but that the English had performed their part, and were ready and able to have done much more, had the support which had been promised been given them, . . he re-embarked, after a fortnight's tarriance on shore, and continued to cruise, as if to

* Froissart, iii. 117.

make it appear that he had been sent out rather to keep the seas than with any more serious views. Perrot le Bearnois, meantime, had performed his instructions well. Taking the field with 400 spears, and as many more attendants, who were denominated by the more significant than honourable appellation of Pillers, he past through the Lemosin, entered Berry, and came into the town of Le Blanc, on fair day, with his unexpected and ugly customers, who carried off not only the goods but the merchants also. "There," says Froissart, "they had great profit and good prisoners." The whole country, as far as the Loire, and beyond that river, was sore dismayed; and the counties of Blois and Touraine partook in the alarm, apprehending that this force would form a junction with that which had landed at Marant, and that some great enterprise was designed. Before they were roused to exert themselves in their own defence, Perrot had plundered the land; and when he and his comrades were satisfied with their booty, they retired with it, in safety, to their own strongholds."*

Such was war during the age of chivalry: except when royal armies took the field in strength, it was carried on in the spirit of privateering by sea and by land, and by the same persons; to all whom it seems to have been indifferent in which service they engaged, and, to most of them, in whose. Courage was carried to its height, and, in some better natures, the principle of honour also; but these unhappily were few; and fewer still were they in whom it was always connected with humanity; there were too many who, like the old vikingr, seemed to think that it became the brave to be merciless; but those who were the most honourable were generally the most compassionate. One who, in those ages, should have asserted that our natural state is a state of warfare would have been borne out in that philosophy, if men were to be regarded only as they then were. There was no other occupation for restless

* Froissart, iii. 117.

spirits, no other education than what directly related to it, for the great and the well-born; no other field for ambition except that of the church, . . into which ambition never ought to enter. Government was nowhere strong enough to maintain order at home, when this outlet for the turbulent and the lawless was closed; and, therefore, every country was sure to be disturbed by factions, or convulsed by civil wars, when it was at peace with its neighbours, and had no foreign enemies to contend with.

Of this the history of the Plantagenets supplies abundant proof. If the duke of Bretagne had been firm of purpose like his mother, and continued steady to his engagements with England, Richard II., instead of being ignominiously deposed and barbarously murdered, might have ended his days as a victorious and popular king. His inclinations were for peace, and in this his uncle, John of Gaunt, concurred with him; but when that prince was sent to confer with the dukes of Berry and Burgundy, and "conclude a perfect peace, both by sea and land, between France and England and all their allies," his brother Gloucester was sent with him, "for he rather desired to have had war than any peace, except such a *one* as should be greatly to the advantage and honour of the realm of England; and, therefore, the commons of England, understanding his disposition, agreed that he should be sent, rather than any other. For where, in times past," says Holinshed, "the Englishmen had greatly gained by the wars of France, as well the commons as the knights and esquires, who had, by the same, maintained their estate, they could not give their willing consents to have any peace at all with the Frenchmen, in hope by reason of the wars to profit themselves as in times past they had done." The first demand which the French made was, that Calais should be rased: they did not require that it should be given up, but that the place should be utterly demolished, so "as there should never be any habitation there after that time." But Calais was all that remained of Edward's

A.D. 1393.

conquests: it was not in the opinion of the English alone, but also of foreign powers, a possession of the greatest importance, as commanding the narrow seas; and the French princes were told, that, if they wished to proceed with the treaty, such a proposal must be spoken of no more.* A truce for four years was concluded: during that interval Richard lost his "good queen Anne" of Bohemia, and contracted a second marriage with the king of France's daughter, Isabelle, a child not past eight years of age; upon which occasion the truce was extended to thirty years. Better had it been for both countries to have continued at war, than that this ample scope should have been given to the factions by which both were soon to be afflicted.

A.D. 1395.

The seas, however, were not safe, though this truce was faithfully observed on both sides. The Danes are said by our chroniclers to have done "much hurt to the English merchants; and, when the haven towns along the coast of Norfolk made forth a number of ships, and ventured to fight with those pirates, they were vanquished by them, so that many were slain, and many taken prisoners, which were constrained to pay great ransoms. The enemies also found, in ransacking the English ships, 20,000*l.*, which the English merchants had on board to buy wares with in the places whither they were bound."† The affairs of the Baltic had so little relation to those of England or France at this time, that it is not surprising to find our chroniclers altogether unacquainted with them, and taking it, as it were, for granted, that any pirates who came from that quarter must be Danes. But there can be no doubt that these piracies were committed by the Vitalians‡, under which dignified appellation northern

* Holinshed, 823. † Ibid. 830.

‡ "Hi prædones voce vernaculâ *Fetalybrodre* Danis vulgo dicti, quod in illo mari passim de commeatu sibi ipsi prospicerent." — (*Pontanus*, p. 520.) Latomus says they agreed to share equally whatever they took, and called themselves *Vittalien-Bruder*, and Gleichebeuter (Genealochronicon Megapolitanum apud Westphalin, iv. 320.). Holberg (i. 503.) derives the name from their intention of relieving Stockholm.

historians have rendered either the homely name of messmates, as assumed by the sea-rovers themselves, or of victuallers, as given them by the people upon whom they foraged, and perhaps because they professed at first to seize food for the purpose of victualling Stockholm, which was, at that time, besieged by the Danes. These are the only pirates since the days of the vikingr, who were openly encouraged, and indeed raised by a regular government. The duke of Mecklenburg caused it to be proclaimed at Rostock, that all who chose to fit out ships and make war by sea and by land upon Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians, subjects of the great queen Margaret, should have the use of his ports, and find there a free market for their plunder. Upon this nefarious invitation, one Bartel Voet offered himself as a captain: outlaws and desperate adventurers from all the Baltic shores joined him in great numbers: they were soon strong enough to take possession of the Isle of Gothland, and making that their station, from thence infested the seas with their cruisers, and "taking a hand's breadth where only a finger's had been given them," they made prize of whatever they met, unless the ships belonged either to Rostock or Wismar, those places being their marts; and this had nearly broken up the union between Mecklenburg and its allies. Their depredations became so injurious, and the devastation which they made in their descents was so great, that all parties, and especially queen Margaret, who was far the most powerful, were induced to make peace, more for the sake of clearing the seas from these pirates than for any other motive. The Vitalians no sooner apprehended their danger than they forsook Gothland, sailed for the coast of Norway, and entering Bergen by force, would have made that place another Jomsburg, if time had been allowed them. But from thence the Danes drove them, and having captured one of their ships with eighty men on board, put them all to death. The loss of that station caused them to dis-

perse; some of them directed their course towards the then undiscovered parts of the north and eastward, from whence very few returned; a larger part got into the Frisian ports, and from thence, as if emulating their ancestors, began to infest not only Belgium, England, and France, but Spain also with their piracies. Thus they existed ten years, to the great hurt as well as reproach of the states which had at first encouraged them, and to the great injury of other nations, till at length Hamburgh sent a squadron to pursue them in what the people of the Baltic call the Western Sea, and bring home for execution, according to the laws enacted against them, all whom they did not sink, burn, or otherwise destroy. Their most notorious captain, Klaas Stortebekker, and another by name Wichmann, were then off the mouth of the Elbe, waiting to intercept the English and other ships: the Hamburgese came down the river in company with some merchantmen, taking care to keep out of sight every thing that could make the pirates apprehend they were prepared for action; and in this they succeeded so well, that the freebooters attacked them, expecting to find an easy prey. Forty of the Vitalians fell in the desperate action that ensued; seventy, including the two captains, were brought prisoners to Hamburgh and there executed, and their heads set upon poles along the banks of the Elbe. Two other captains, Weichbold and Gotke Michael, took vengeance for their deaths upon such as fell into their hands. The former was a master of arts,..an outcast, therefore, or renegade from some clerical state; he retained, however, his superstition when he had dispensed with his religion, and trusted for security to a relic of St. Vincent the Martyr. These men, who were noted for their depredations upon the English, were met with off Heligoland, captured, and with their surviving crews, to the number of fourscore, beheaded, their heads also being exposed upon the shore. After the loss of their leaders the Vitalians no longer

existed as a body, but the name long continued, in those parts, to be synonymous with pirates.*

The inclination to piracy could seldom be wanting among sailors of that age; and it is probable that many acts of this kind ascribed to these freebooters were committed by men who passed with the reputation of fair traders. Ambassadors came to Richard II. from Conrad von Zolner, the twentieth grand master of the Teutonic order, complaining of various wrongs and outrages inflicted upon his subjects, notwithstanding the old amity between the kings of England and the masters of that order, and the assistance which they had received from the barons, knights, and other nobles of this realm in their conquest of the infidels. His subjects and merchants, he said, had "sustained sundry damages and ablations by divers inhabitants of England, and that very often, and both by sea and land." Some of these injuries were in king Edward's time: they had since become more frequent; and having been duly put down in registers, and recorded in his cities in the land of Prussia, the sufferers had obtained his letters both to the late king, and sundry times to Richard also, praying for restitution, "whereby, however, they nothing at all prevailed, but heaping loss upon loss, mis-spent their time and their charges. He had, therefore, repeatedly been solicited to afford these his subjects such restitution as was in his power, seeing that so much wealth of the English merchants was every year to be found in Prussia, as if it were seized might afford them some reasonable

* Pontanus, 520—534. Holberg, i. 503. 505. 515. Bern. (Latomus, Genealochronicon Megapolitanum, apud Westphalin, iv. 320. 329, 330. Lamb. Alardus, Res Nordabengicæ, ibid. i. 1822. Ibid. iii. Præf. 86. There is one writer in Westphalin's valuable collection who gloses over the origin of these pirates, and keeps out of sight the remainder of their history. This is Corn. Hamsfortius, in his work De Rebus Holsatorum Vicinarumque Gentium præclare gestis. He says (i. 1722), "Holsatis tulere opem ob Danorum piraticas excursiones, Hamburgenses, Lubecenses, Vismarienses, Rostochienses, Sundenses, et alii maritimarum urbium incolæ, qui Vithaliani sunt dicti." Latomus says of them (iv. 380.), "Es stehet nicht zu beschreiben, wie viel des losen und bösen volcks, als ihnen der raub zügel los gelassen ward, zusammen lieff, aus allen landen von bauern und burgern, und andern desindlein. Den alle so keine lust zu arbeiten hatten, die liessen sich begucken von den Dänischen und Norwegischen bauern reich zu werden."

satisfaction. But he and his predecessors had always deferred this, out of "mere and principal respect to the special courtesies and favours" which they had received from the kings of England; nor had there yet in retaliation for these injuries been any manner of offence or molestation offered to any of the king's subjects, noble or ignoble. He complained especially of an outrage committed the preceding summer upon six Prussian vessels in the Zwiju, aggravated by circumstances of great treachery and insult. The English ships anchored beside these Prussian merchantmen as friends, "protesting unto them that they should in no sort be molested or damnified by any of their company, but that they would faithfully defend them, as if they were their own people, from the hands of their adversaries," meaning, no doubt, the Vitalians. Under this pretext, and "for their further security and trust," they sent some of their own men on board; after which, they first took from them "all kind of armours, wherewith they were to protect themselves against pirates, plundered them of money, jewels, garments, and all the goods and merchandises they could find, burnt one of the ships, and carried two of the captains away with them to Sandwich." These captains were not permitted to land there; and when released, were made to swear that they would make no complaint to the king of England, his council, or his chancellor. "Go your ways home," it was said to them: "in your own country of Prussia there are English merchants and goods sufficient: recover your losses upon them, and take two for one!" The solicitations of these men, and of other sufferers, were such, that, "full sore against his will," the grand master had found it necessary to arrest the English goods and merchants in his cities of Elburg and Dantzic, and detain them in sure places, till the whole premises could be laid before the king of England. There were some Englishmen, who, "not seeking for peace," had falsely informed the king and his council that these merchants were "barbarously entreated, cast into

loathsome prisons, where they were drenched in mire and water, fed like dogs, and restrained from all conference and company of men;" and, in consequence of this slanderous representation, certain merchants of Prussia and of other regions of Germany had been apprehended as malefactors in London, and imprisoned there, till the truth had been made known. This seems to have been done by some former ambassadors; and with these, for not entering England till they had obtained a safe-conduct, the grand master said he was exceedingly offended, "because there is no need of safe-conduct between special friends." He now prayed that such enemies of truth and concord as had thus slanderously devised concerning him and his people might be chastised in such manner that they might be an example to others; and he prayed also that mutual restitution might be made, and all wrongs redressed.

A.D. 1388. Ambassadors* accordingly were sent to Prussia to accommodate these differences, and an agreement was then concluded,.. "forasmuch," the preamble stateth, "as the Author of peace will have peacemakers to be the sons of blessedness, and the execrable enemy of peace to be expelled out of the dominions of Christians." By this agreement, all arrests, reprisals, and impignorations were to be released, all demands in consequence of them declared void, and all actions arising therefrom "extinct and of none effect:" — a provision which left the injured parties with their loss. Prussian claimants upon England for injuries sustained in the Zwijn or elsewhere, were to repair to England, or send their procurators, and there propound their complaints to the king, who was bound to do his endeavour that they should have restitution of their goods, or "at least complete justice and judgment without delay." English claimants were in like manner to have recourse to the grand master. So, too, where any criminal complaint was to be propounded, as that a brother, or other kinsman, had been slain,

* They were master Nicholas Stocket, licentiate of both laws, Walter Sibel, and Thomas Graa, citizens of London and York.

wounded, or maimed; in such cases, the ambassadors, after full enquiry, were authorised to ordain "a friendly reconciliation, or honest recompense between the parties;" and if the principal offender should be dead, the complainants were to have their remedy against the goods or heirs of the offender. This agreement was not carried into effect when the grand master died; and as the Prussian merchants, at the end of ten years, were still aggrieved in England, his successor, Conrad von Jungingen, in consequence of renewed complaints, and, perhaps, also finding it advisable to commence his administration by a measure that should render him popular with the mercantile part of his subjects, refused to stand bound by the engagement, and by his letters to the king of England declared it void "from henceforth, and for the time heretofore also." This, however, was done in no hostile temper: a year from the date of such renunciation was allowed for the English to remove their goods, provided the Prussians were allowed the same: "and in any affairs whatsoever," said the grand master, "both ourselves and our whole order are right willing devoutly to submit ourselves unto your highness's pleasure and command; and also to benefit and promote your subjects, we will endeavour to the utmost of our ability." Matters remained in this state, when Richard II.'s reign was brought to its* disastrous termination.

A.D. 1398.

* Hakluyt, i. 148—154.

NOTES.

Richard I. in Cyprus, p. 166.

This part of Cœur de Lion's history is thus curiously related in Robert Barret's Sacred War, a Poem Epike, containing between 50,000 and 60,000 lines, which the patient writer intended for publication in the year 1613, and of which what is, no doubt, the only existing manuscript is in my possession. Some former specimens of it, which were inserted in the notes to Roderick, have had the rare fortune of being translated into Dutch verse, by the masterly hand of one who could transfuse the peculiarity of its unique style.

It seem'd them good to stay King Richard's coming;
Who later had sails hoisted from Messine,
Having with Tancred ended quarrels humming,
Bringing along with him his spoused queen,
Berengar, daughter to Barcelon's duke,
And Joan his sister, late Sicilia's queen,
Out launched on seas, nought fearing the rebuke
Of blusterers' king, and king of liquid main.
When lo, unlooked for, in a time serene
The blusterers' king, up stirrings bengle tines,
Caused the king of green waves greenish reign
To swell, and swelling blanch his brinish crines.
Puffeth full-cheeked Æol; Neptune pouts;
Puffing and pouting, ships tempested are.
The pilots call, the matelots run about,
And every one surcharged is with care.
With storms increase, increaseth care and toil,
And care and toil surtoileth marine crew.
One ship triremes, two fail in this coil,
And failing, sink under sea's mantle blue.
In fine, don Æol husht, and Neptune calm,
Descryed is the isle of lovers' queen.

The fleet regathered with a joyful palm,
Their cleave-wave prows bend toward Cyprus green.
Accosted near the shore, shorists unkind
Landing deny to Lion-hearted king.
King lion-like gurleth and teeth doth grind,
Threat'ning revenge with a Rhamnusian sting,
Shore re-attempteth and shore entereth on;
Shore seized, seizeth island victor-like.
In Mavors' teen setteth islanders on,
Some slaughtering, slaving some, revenger-like,
And so by Mavors' sword he masterizeth
Isle signiorized by Isaac Cominen,
Who in Byzantine's name isle tyrannizeth;
Which Isaac falls in hands of Albion's men,
Enlarged, yields up scepterage's sway,
To the swayer of the ocean-clipped isle;
So Albion's crowgest beareth crown away,
Of Cyprus' crown and entereth royal file;
And so that isle, once en[illegible]
Falls under shelter of [illegible]
Isaac released and by [illegible]
Refalls to's vomit, 'se[illegible] [illegible]eld,
But soon regorged is [illegible] [illegible]on great,
And brought unto the swinge of Albion's lure.
This done, there hymenizeth Berengaret,
And king becomes of Great Paphista's ure.
The Paphian diadem resettled thus,
Richard retaking seas, arrives at camp,
Refilling camp with joys of joyful use,
His rays dechasing fogs of foeman's damp.

Damme, p. 185

The work from which this town derived its name was considered of such importance in that age, that Dante has introduced it for a simile in his Inferno.

Ora cen' porta l'un de' duri margini,
E 'l fumo del ruscel di sopra aduggia
Si, che dal fuoco salva l'acqua, e gli argini.
Quale i Fiamminghi tra Guizzante e Bruggia
Temendo 'l fiott, che in ver lor s'avventa,
Fanno lo schermo, perchè 'l mar si fuggia
E quale i Padovan, lungo la Brenta,
Per difender lor ville e lor castelli,
Anzi che Chiarentana il caldo senta:
A tale imagine eran fatti quelli,
Tutto che nè sì alti, nè sì grossi,
Qual che si fosse, lo maestro felli. *Canto* xv.

Cadsant is the place which, *mendose et typographe forte incuriâ*, Ludovico Guicciardini says Dante has called Guizzante. And this has misled Mr. Cary in his admirable translation:—

> One of the solid margins bears us now
> Enveloped in the mist, that from the stream
> Arising hovers o'er, and saves from fire
> Both piers and water. As the Flemings rear
> Their mound, 'twixt Ghent and Bruges, to chase back
> The ocean, fearing his tumultuous tide
> That drives toward them; or the Paduans theirs
> Along the Brenta, to defend their towns
> And castles, ere the general warmth be felt
> On Chiarentana's top; such were the mounds
> So framed, though not in height or bulk to these
> Made equal, by the master, whosoe'er
> He was, that raised them here.

Sluys, p.

As late as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this was called the Port of Flanders, as being so much more frequented than any other, that it needed no other distinction.

"Cum enim Flandriæ littus nullis, fluminum ostiis ad oceanum nobile sit, portus nullos, extra sinus quosdam maris, accipiendis classibus idoneos habet, qui et ipsi refluo æquore naves plerumque in siccum destituunt. Solum illud Slusæ aquagium, duplici fossâ contrariæ indolis, et ex re nominis, olim, ut et hodie, optimam navigantibus stationem præbuisse videtur."—*Eyndius, quoted by Sanderus Flandria Illustrata*, ii. 214.

The people here related as a miracle that, in the year 1441, when a slight duty was imposed upon the muscle fishery, the muscles disappeared, but became as abundant as before, when the duty was taken off. Sunt enim inopibus obvium alimentum. Marchantius affirms this, and Sanderus after him. That the duty should have stopt the fishery is very likely, and that being repealed, it should be resumed with as much success as before is not at all surprising.

Fish can no otherwise be affected by fiscal regulations than as the market is thereby affected. But naval war, since the introduction of gunpowder, has affected the lobsters. after a great naval action the fishermen say that those on the adjacent coast are found to have cast their claws, and for a while they forsake those parts.

Jeanne de Valois, p. [illegible]3.

Some of May's best verses are those in which he describes this lady's interference: —

And now the two incensed kings are met;
And their great cause on one day's trial set,
(As all believe) all expectations near
Are drawn, nor have they time to hope or fear.
The armies both stand ranged in fair array;
And fierce Bellona proud of such a day,
(As if it lay not in the power of chance
The storm to scatter) shakes her dreadful lance;
For like two high-swoln seas on either side,
Whose meeting rage no isthmus did divide,
But winds, that from contrary quarters blow,
Together drive, the two battalions show.
But that eternal God, who from on high
Surveys all hosts, disposes victory,
(Called thence the Lord of Hosts) and sets the times
Of war or peace, as sinful nations' crimes
Provoke his justice, did not think it good
That cloud should yet dissolve in showers of blood;
But pleased to respite for a time the woes
Of wretched France; and for this purpose chose
An instrument whose weakness might make known
The power that reconciled them was his own.
A veiled nun alone could interpose
And stay the fury of these armed foes:
Jane de Valois, a princely lady, near
To one in blood, as by alliance dear
To t'other; mother to great Edward's queen
And Philip's sister; who of late had been,
Since Hainault's death, at Fontehelles vow'd
A holy nun. She, wakened with the loud
Alarms of this so great, so feared a blow,
Her quiet cloister had forsaken now.
Amidst their armed troops her way she took,
And through the rudest breast a reverence strook.
Well did the fame of her chaste life before
Become the sacred habit that she wore.
Pure innocence her snow-white veil profest,
Her black a sorrow silently exprest.
Grave was her comely face; devotion
On beauty's ruins with more beauty shone.

Edward the Thi[illegible] lib. iii

Naval Council in Edward III.'s Reign, A. D. 1341, p. 259.

The places from which deputies were to be sent to this council, and the number of representatives, are stated as follows: —

Magnæ Jernemuth, de duobus hominibus.
Gosefford de duobus.
Lenn' de duobus.
Geppewicæ de uno.
Winchelse de duobus.
Dovorr' de uno.
Rye de uno.
Hastinges de uno.
Suthampton de duobus.
Plymouth de duobus.
Dertmouth de duobus.
Weymouth de uno.
Bristoll de duobus.
De Sancto Botulpho de uno.
Kingeston super Hull de duobus.
De Villa Novi Castre super Tynam de duobus.
Falmuth de uno.
Pevense de uno.
Seford de uno.
Shorham de uno.
Hoke de uno.
Pole de uno.
Exmuth de uno.
Tengemuth de uno.
Fowy de uno.
Ravensere de uno.
Parvæ Jernemuth de uno.

Rymer, ii. p. 2. 1150.

Naval Council, A.D. 1344, p. 282.

The additional ports from which deputies were summoned were these: —

Scardeburgh de uno homine.
Grymesby de uno.
Donewico de uno.
Colcestr' de uno.
Herewico de uno.
Orford de uno.
Maldon de uno.

Sandewico de duobus.
Waynflet de uno.
Lyme de uno.
Cicestr de duobus.
Portesmuth de uno.
Sancta Elena in Insula Vieta de uno.
Melcombe de uno.
Romeneye de uno.
Exon' de duobus.
Sidemuth de uno.
Barnastaple de uno.
Londoniæ de quatuor.
Blakeneye de uno.

The ports omitted in this list, but included in the earlier one, are the two Yarmouths, Hoke, Teignmouth, and Fowey.

The Question is what that Powder was, p. 295. *note.*

Mr. Bree finds mention among the stores for the garrison in Guernsey Castle (A. D. 1339,) "trente tonneaulx de *pomadre,* cinquante quintals de fer, deux quintals d'acier." He thought from the context that the word *pomadre* might mean gunpowder; but he had found the word no where else, except in a MS. record, "reciting letters of pardon to several persons for arrearages of debt due to the King, where, in one granted to Thomas de Brockhall, pur trente et deux tonneaulx de pomadre, des queux il est charge de son account, di tems que il estoit assigne de faire divers purveyances ad opus le roi, en conte de Kent." (pp. 136, 137.)

This, perhaps, is the record to which Barnes refers; but the signification of the word is altogether doubtful; and in this second instance there is nothing in the context that can guide us to it.

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